

**NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT** for the **ARTS**

 arts.gov

Annual Performance Plan

FY 2023

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Introduction

“The arts... belong to all the people of the United States.”

- National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965

As the premier arts agency of the U.S. government, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has positioned itself as a vital and sustaining force in American culture, committed to serving all people throughout the nation by bringing the arts into their lives, schools, and neighborhoods. Another enduring role of the agency is to cultivate and elevate existing artistic and cultural traditions as critical assets within communities.

Over the past 50+ years, the NEA has become the largest funder of the arts and arts education nationwide and, as a catalyst of public and private support for the arts, an essential institution. Established by Congress in 1965, the NEA annually awards an average of approximately 2,400 grants and cooperative agreements exceeding \$129 million, funding the arts in all 50 states and six U.S. jurisdictions, including rural and urban areas. The NEA also exercises leadership by supporting key initiatives, research and evaluation, and domestic and international partnerships.

The arts' tangible and intangible rewards extend to various realms of our lives. Among the more measurable benefits that the arts confer to society are job creation and economic growth. As of 2019, for example, arts and cultural production added 4.3 percent directly to the nation's GDP, for a total approaching a trillion dollars (\$919.7 billion). In the same year, the sector employed 5.2 million wage-and-salary workers whose total compensation was \$447 billion. NEA funding to organizations that provide the arts and arts education throughout the U.S. serves this greater economic good, catalyzing further investments in jobs and economic activity that can improve lives and livelihoods for Americans everywhere.

Most recently, in recognition of the NEA's capacity to promote job growth and financial well-being across the sector—outcomes that translate to whole communities and to the nation itself—Congress appropriated additional funds to the NEA under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. This historic legislation is intended to fuel U.S. recovery from the devastating economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NEA's grantees are vital partners in extending these and other benefits. Eligible applicants to the NEA include nonprofit organizations; units of state and local government; federally recognized tribal communities or tribes. The agency also awards honorifics in jazz and folk/traditional arts, and fellowships to creative writers and literary translators. Notwithstanding additional awards such as those administered under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the NEA makes dollar-for-dollar cost-share/matching grants to support exemplary projects in the following areas:

Artist Communities
Arts Education
Creative Placemaking
Dance
Design
Folk & Traditional Arts
International
Literary Arts
Local Arts Agencies
Media Arts

Museums
Music
Musical Theater
Opera
Presenting & Multidisciplinary Works
Research
State & Regional Arts Organizations
Theater
Visual Art

All grant applications to the NEA are reviewed on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit. Applications generally receive three levels of review. First, they are evaluated by advisory panels composed of a diverse group of disciplinary experts and other individuals, including at least one knowledgeable layperson. Panels make recommendations that are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts.

The National Council on the Arts, the NEA's standing advisory body, is comprised of nationally and internationally renowned artists, distinguished scholars, and arts patrons appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The Council also includes non-voting Members of Congress who are appointed by Senate and House leadership from both sides of the aisle. The Council reviews and votes to approve or reject the applications. Its recommendations for funding are sent to the NEA Chair, who reviews those applications and makes the final decision on all grant awards.

Forty percent of the NEA's grantmaking dollars are awarded to the nation's 56 state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and the six regional arts organizations (RAOs). These funds are administered through Partnership Agreements with the SAAs and RAOs—an investment that catalyzes arts projects in thousands of communities across the country. Partnership Agreements allow the NEA to build and sustain local capacity for planning, programming, evaluation, and communications.

Through these agreements, moreover, the NEA supports creation and implementation of statewide and regionwide plans for strengthening arts education and fostering the arts in underserved communities. Each plan responds to the unique needs of the state or region and its constituents, whose views are solicited by each SAA/RAO through surveys, town hall meetings, arts practitioner convenings, policymaker consultations, and other forms of citizen engagement.

Together with the funding that the NEA's grants agency's reach and impact, aligning national leadership with local practices and benefits. These partners are critical to the NEA's ability to fulfill its mission.

Mission: *The arts strengthen and promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the National Endowment for the Arts fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.*

Arts participation means taking part in any number of activities that include the visual and performing arts, crafts and media arts, design, and literary arts and arts education. People engage with the arts as audience members, as viewers or listeners, as readers or learners, and as creators, curators, or performers. These diverse modes of arts participation—and different forms and genres of artistic expression—quicken and enlarge our sensibilities. The arts broaden and enhance our understanding and our connections to one another and to the greater world.

As with individuals, communities and society at large benefit from the arts and arts education—culturally, civically, and economically. The arts heal and unite: they nurture a sense of shared identity, but they also permit distinctive and often marginalized voices to be heard. It is the responsibility of the NEA to elevate artistic achievements throughout the country and to offer people from all backgrounds the opportunity to partake of this living cultural heritage. By performing these functions, the NEA will help to expand the number of arts participants nationwide and to extend the social, educational, and economic benefits of the arts to communities of every type.

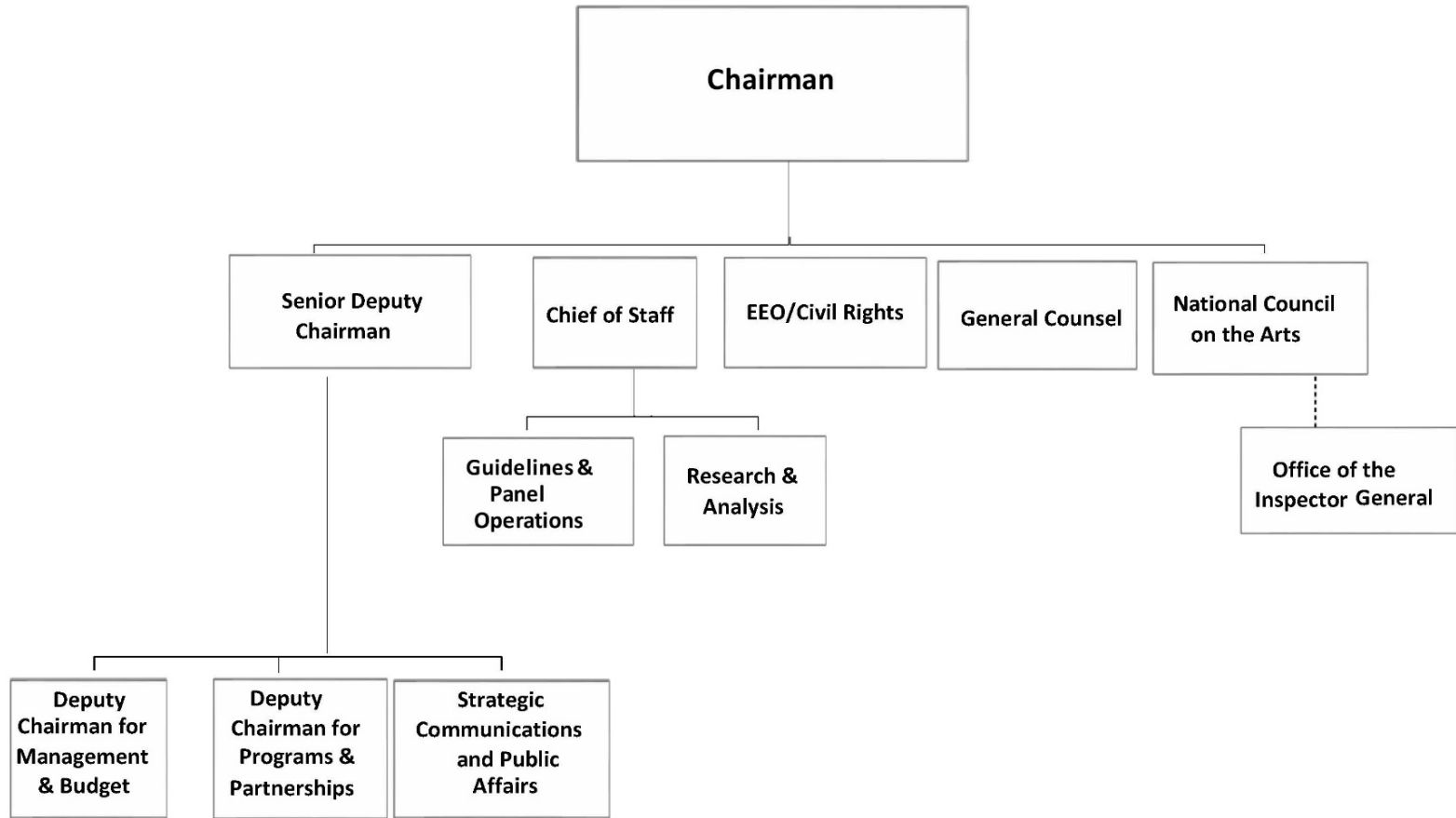
Vision Statement: *A nation in which the arts are essential to our democracy and to reaching our highest potential by nourishing creative enterprise, freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry.*

By giving voice to unique talents and perspectives through creative expression, the arts embody and reflect the boldness of our democratic experiment. In remarks he gave at Amherst College on October 26, 1963, President John F. Kennedy described how in the case of the poet Robert Frost, who had died earlier that year, “the artist’s fidelity has strengthened the fiber of our national life.” The President went on to champion the truth-telling powers of artists and the vision of “an America that commands respect not only for its strength but for its civilization as well.”

President Kennedy added: “If sometimes our great artists have been the most critical of our society, it is because their sensitivity and their concern for justice, which must motivate any true artists, make them aware that our nation falls short of its highest potential.” A nation that respects and celebrates the arts is unafraid of inquiring into its mores and behaviors, and re-imagining a more just future. The arts are vital, therefore, to our democratic process, just as they embolden creativity, innovation, and all free thinking.

The agency's goals, and the objectives and strategies to achieve them, including cross-agency collaborations, are detailed in the National Endowment for the Arts Strategic Plan FY 2022-2026, which will be issued in March 2022. This Annual Performance Plan is based on the Strategic Plan and describes the performance goals and indicators necessary to assess the agency's progress in accomplishing its strategic objectives. The plan also describes research and evaluation activities that supported the development of the Annual Performance Plan and Strategic Plan, and information on data validation and verification.

Fig. 1. National Endowment for the Arts Organizational Structure (DRAFT – updates currently in process)



Performance Framework

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Annual Performance Plan (APP) supports the NEA Strategic Plan: FY 2022-2026, which is posted on the NEA website. The Strategic Plan outlines the agency's strategic goals and objectives and the means and strategies to accomplish them. The APP sets out performance goals and indicators in support of the strategic objectives.

The NEA APP has three major components: (1) strategic goals and objectives; (2) performance goals; and (3) performance and other indicators.

The **strategic goals and objectives**, which are outlined in the Strategic Plan, are the starting point for the FY 2023 APP. This nexus between the Strategic Plan and the APP helps to ensure that the performance goals are integrated with the agency's mission. Goal leaders are identified for each strategic objective.

The **performance goals** in the APP link directly to each strategic objective in the NEA Strategic Plan. The NEA selected these performance goals because they are intermediate outcomes or outputs necessary to achieve the strategic objectives.

The **performance and other indicators** are measures the NEA intends to assess during FY 2023. In many cases, these indicators track incremental progress toward achieving the performance goals.

Targets are identified for performance indicators only. Since many performance indicators are new, targets have not yet been established in every case, as they will rely on collection of new baseline data and/or revisions to data-collection instruments; this has been indicated by "baseline data not available." "Other" indicators are not assigned targets; "target not required" appears in the target cell for these indicators. Documentation on data validation and verification is presented later in this plan.

During the term of the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the NEA may adjust or add performance goals and/or their underlying measures. Currently, for example, the agency is exploring the use of data science methods to more efficiently analyze textual data from grantee reports. Also, implementation of the proposed APP is contingent on the agency's ability to maintain funding levels and staffing for this work.

Strategic Goal 1. Support opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and arts education.

The arts celebrate our differences while connecting us through shared experiences. Americans from all backgrounds can experience the arts by attending music, dance, and theater performances, visiting art and design exhibits, reading or listening to works of literature, and enjoying the arts via media and technology. Participation also can involve making art of one's own, whether alone or with other people, and acquiring an arts education—knowledge, skills, and competencies that can last a lifetime. All of these varieties of participation can and do occur anywhere, in formal or informal settings, whether inside or outside a specific cultural tradition.

Although the arts are a universal resource, long prized by nations for transmitting cultural identity and creative expression, there is no guarantee that everyone will have equal access to arts opportunities. In the U.S., socioeconomic and geographic factors play an outsized role in people's ability to participate in the arts.

Federal surveys consistently show that higher education and income levels, as well as urbanicity, are closely correlated with greater rates of arts participation. Most recently, a Survey of Public Participation in the Arts found that one in three U.S. adults could not agree with the following statement: "There are plenty of opportunities for me to take part in arts and cultural activities in my neighborhood or community." Among those most likely not to agree were Blacks and Hispanics/Latinos.¹

By ensuring greater opportunities for everyone to take part in the arts and arts education, the NEA will extend the benefits of those activities to more Americans. Such benefits are not limited to aesthetic, emotional, or intellectual rewards. They translate to greater social, civic, and economic well-being in the lives of individuals, of whole communities, and of a nation itself.

Strategic Objective 1.1 Expand Public Access to the NEA's Programs and Award-Supported Activities.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships

People connect with the arts by attending music, dance, and theater performances; by visiting architectural wonders and art exhibits; by reading works of literature; or by picking up a paintbrush or pencil to capture the world around them or to sketch their innermost thoughts. Today, they even carry in their pockets—in the form of smartphones—access to museums, concert halls, stages, and studios that enable

¹ https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/US_Patterns_of_Arts_ParticipationRevised.pdf. (Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.)

individual arts experiences on demand. For artists and audiences alike, new pathways for participation abound. And yet, access to those in-person and/or digital pathways is by no means guaranteed

The NEA addresses this need by providing opportunities for the public to engage with the arts through its grant programs, including through Partnership Agreement grants to SAAs and RAOs. The agency’s grantmaking is responsive to the changing landscape of arts participation and arts production. The NEA rewards innovative strategies and models for engaging the public directly with arts experiences, for preserving them, and for making them accessible to all. At the same time, the NEA strives to promote funding and partnership opportunities to all eligible entities, whether or not they have experienced prior success in competing for these resources.

Performance Goal 1.1.1 The NEA increases the percentage of grant applications received from first-time applicants.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA, by first-time applicant status. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Performance	14%
2. Success rate of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA, by first-time applicant status. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Other*	Target not required

*The success rate of applications is not considered a performance indicator because factors beyond first-applicant status determine the selection of applications for award. All grant applications to the NEA are reviewed on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit. Applications are evaluated by advisory panels composed of a diverse group of disciplinary experts and other individuals, including at least one knowledgeable layperson. Panels make recommendations that are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts.

Performance Goal 1.1.2 The NEA increases the number of communities that host NEA grantee organizations and NEA-supported project activities.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of unique communities that contain NEA grantee organizations. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Performance	697
2. Number of unique communities where NEA-supported project activities took place. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	2,361

Performance Goal 1.1.3 The NEA supports projects that expand access to the arts through strategic partnerships.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of NEA-supported projects that identify, as strategic partners, organizations outside the arts sector. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	17.5%
2. Percent of NEA-supported projects that identify minority-serving institutions of higher education as strategic partners. <i>Source: GAF</i>	Other	Target not required

Strategic Objective 1.2 Prioritize Data-Driven Methods to Broaden and Deepen Engagement with Underserved Communities.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships
Office of Research & Analysis

Data and evidence are poised to improve the agency’s administration of grants and programs so that even larger numbers of people—from more diverse backgrounds than before—can benefit from NEA programs and grant activities. Tools like U.S. Census Bureau data files and geospatial mapping will allow the agency to target historically underserved areas more effectively in its engagement efforts.²

One example of an NEA program dedicated to this type of engagement is Challenge America, which supports underserved populations through grants to primarily small and mid-sized organizations. Beyond this program, the agency routinely conducts outreach so that its programs and grant-supported activities can benefit people in every Congressional District. Through targeted outreach and award programs, the NEA extends economic opportunities through the arts and creativity to underserved communities and regions across the nation.

In recent years, moreover, the NEA has elevated opportunities for tribal nations, historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and other minority-serving institutions of higher education to participate in NEA programs. By consulting empirical data as the agency undertakes these and other initiatives, the NEA will achieve a greater likelihood of success in building and sustaining relationships with people and

² For a definition of “underserved,” see the White House *Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, Jan. 20, 2021.

organizations that have been underserved by NEA programs.

Performance Goal 1.2.1 The NEA increases engagement with potential applicant organizations in underserved communities.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of organizations located in underserved communities and that are engaged through technical assistance (e.g., webinars or other events/services) provided by the NEA. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Percent of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA from organizations located in underserved communities. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Performance	45%
3. Success rate of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA from organizations located in underserved communities. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Other*	Target not required

*See earlier footnote regarding success rate.

Performance Goal 1.2.2 The NEA increases engagement with potential applicant organizations that primarily address underserved communities.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA from organizations primarily addressing underserved communities. <i>Source: eGMS, GAF</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Success rate of applications received and adjudicated by the NEA from organizations primarily addressing underserved communities. <i>Source: eGMS, GAF</i>	Other*	Target not required

* See earlier footnote regarding success rate.

Strategic Objective 1.3 Provide Opportunities for People throughout the Country to Participate in Arts Education and to Increase Their Knowledge and Skills in the Arts at All Stages of Life.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Arts Education Division

Folk & Traditional Arts Division

By helping to foster public appreciation and understanding of various art forms, genres, and artistic traditions, the NEA will build public capacity for lifelong participation in the arts. For audiences and learners, the outcome will be vibrant and transformative arts experiences. For artists and teachers, the NEA will facilitate the transfer of critical knowledge and skills that will enable them to refine and improve their work.

The arts are essential to a well-rounded education. Numerous studies have revealed the social and emotional benefits of arts education for early childhood development, and the ability of arts education to bridge gaps in academic achievement among teenagers and youth who come from less privileged backgrounds than others. Additionally, arts education contributes to students' acquisition and development of skills (e.g., the "four Cs"—communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and especially creativity) that have been closely associated with 21st-century job requirements. Further along the lifespan, older adults who engage with the arts have reported higher levels of cognitive ability and fewer limitations to their physical functioning.

The agency's grants support arts learning activities across a variety of artistic disciplines for people of all ages. Grants awarded by the NEA Arts Education division K-12 students. However, NEA grants, including from other offices, also support the integration of arts learning with other academic curricula, including STEM disciplines. Beyond grants for student learners, Arts Education grants support professional development opportunities for educators, including but not limited to arts instructors. Additionally, NEA programs such as Poetry Out Loud offer arts learning experiences for high school students (including, in this case, benefits that extend from poetry appreciation to language skills development).

Apprenticeships are time-honored programs allowing master artists to train apprentices, often over an extended period of time. These trainees then have the ability to teach others, sharing what they have learned with their own communities. Formal learning programs of this nature are instrumental in passing on cultural knowledge to the next generation. Through the NEA's continued support of state folklife programs and their apprenticeship awards, the agency ensures that traditional artists have the opportunity to pass on the techniques and cultural knowledge of their

art forms, which can be as diverse as Mexican ballet folklorico, Northern Arapaho beadwork, gospel singing, and taiko drumming. The NEA also supports apprenticeships directly through its own grantmaking. As with the NEA’s support of the arts and arts education more generally, such apprenticeships form a critical link in connecting economic and labor-related outcomes from artistic practice to communities at large.

Performance Goal 1.3.1 The NEA engages underserved youth in arts education through activities supported by its awards and partnerships.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of arts education projects located in underserved communities and that directly engaged youth. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	47%
2. Percent of arts education projects supported by subawards through NEA Partnership Agreements, that were located in underserved communities, and that directly engaged youth. <i>Source: SAA/RAO FDR</i>	Other	Target not required

Performance Goal 1.3.2 The NEA supports the arts education sector with convenings, research, and technical assistance.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to the arts education sector. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Objective 1.4 Ensure Opportunities for the International Exchange of Artists and Arts and Cultural Traditions.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of International Activities
 Literary Arts Division

According to the founding legislation for the NEA, the United States’ reputation as a world leader must not “rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the Nation’s high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit.”

Nowhere are these traits better exemplified than in America’s artistic and cultural contributions. International demand for U.S. artists and their artworks is best captured by a single statistic. In 2019, the most recent year for which such data are available, the U.S. exported \$33 billion more in arts and cultural goods and services than it imported from other countries.³ Unlike many other segments of the nation’s economy, the arts and culture segment is running a trade surplus.

By working with the State Department and other entities to enable nation-to-nation exchanges of artists and artworks, the NEA assists in providing U.S. artists access to global markets and audiences. Concurrently, international exchanges permit U.S. audiences, artists, and communities to experience vibrant cultural traditions and artists from abroad.

Apart from fostering such exchanges, the NEA communicates regularly with international scholars, policymakers, and arts administrators who seek to learn about U.S. infrastructure for domestic arts programs. All of these activities help to advance the federal government’s efforts at cultural diplomacy. They also nourish the capacity of artists and audiences everywhere to realize their shared humanity through various forms of creativity and cultural expression.

Performance Goal 1.4.1 The NEA supports opportunities for the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions, which yield demonstrable benefits for the artists and the arts.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of artists participating in the NEA-supported USArtists International program who report benefits for their professional and career development. <i>Source: USAI survey</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Number of NEA awards that support the international exchange of artists and arts and cultural traditions. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Other	Target not required
3. Number of NEA awards that support the translation of specific works of prose, poetry, or drama from other languages into English. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Other	Target not required

³ <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/SummaryReportAccessLinks.pdf>. (Accessed Dec. 9, 2021.)

Strategic Goal 2. Integrate the Arts with Strategies that Promote the Well-Being and Resilience of People and Communities.

Over the last few years in particular, the nation has been tested with extreme pressure on its healthcare system, its economy and environment, and its sense of fairness and social justice. Throughout such traumas as COVID-19, racial violence, and natural disasters, the arts have been a force for healing and repair. Through direct grantmaking and strategic partnerships, the NEA will continue to support projects that integrate arts-based strategies in health, community development, and emergency preparedness and responsiveness. These systems-based approaches to achieve positive outcomes for towns and neighborhoods already have been central to arts-and-public health initiatives, to the arts' deployment in disaster relief, to collective efforts to achieve equitable access in arts education, and to a variety of activities known as creative placemaking—the integration of arts, culture, and design with comprehensive community development. This strategic goal will permit more focused investments in communal spaces—but it also will bring greater visibility to the use of design and arts programs and therapies in improving health and well-being for individuals and communities.

Strategic Objective 2.1 Support Arts Projects with a Focus on Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Individuals.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Senior Advisor on Innovation to the Chair
Office of Accessibility
Office of Research & Analysis

In partnership with U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and state and local arts agencies, the NEA directs Creative Forces ®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network. The initiative places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care at clinical sites throughout the country, including telehealth services, and increases access to community arts activities to promote health, wellness, and quality of life for military service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers. Furthermore, in partnership with the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant program aims to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military-connected populations by empowering creative expression, building social connections, and improving resilience.

The lessons learned from implementing Creative Forces will inform other strategies to advance individual health and well-being through the arts. The networking, technical

assistance, and the evaluation and learning that occur across the Creative Forces program are typical of the field-building activities necessary to realize this strategic objective for broader population groups. At the federal level, the NEA models this knowledge transfer by leading the Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development, which meets quarterly to examine research projects and evidence-based practice at the intersection of the arts, health, and human development.

Indeed, apart from Creative Forces, the NEA regularly supports not only creative arts therapies (e.g., art therapy, music therapy, dance/movement therapy, and drama therapy), but also arts-in-health programs that occur in clinical and non-clinical settings. Additionally—through direct grants and through partnerships with SAAs and RAOs—the agency funds arts projects that support healthy aging and healthy childhood and youth development, as well as rehabilitation and recovery for people in trauma, or those in prison or juvenile justice settings.

Performance Goal 2.1.1 The NEA supports projects and partnerships that engage individuals in activities with the intent of advancing their health and well-being through the arts.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of people who participated (in person or virtually) in NEA-supported activities focused on advancing the health and well-being of individuals through the arts. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Number of service members served by Creative Forces clinical creative arts therapists. <i>Source: Clinical documentation</i>	Performance	2,500
3. Number of therapeutic encounters facilitated by Creative Forces clinical creative arts therapists. <i>Source: Clinical documentation</i>	Performance	14,500

Performance Goal 2.1.2 Through convenings, research, and technical assistance, the NEA supports practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers at the intersection of the arts and health and well-being.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers seeking to advance individual health and well-being through the arts. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Objective 2.2 Embed the Arts in System-Wide Initiatives that Strengthen or Heal Communities.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Design & Creative Placemaking Division

Arts Education Division
Folk & Traditional Arts Division

Beyond supporting arts projects that advance individual health and well-being, the NEA supports grassroots partnerships that integrate the arts with long-term strategies to heal a whole community, or to protect or revitalize its natural, cultural, and economic resources. On a local level, these strategies often take the shape of creative placemaking programs—such as those supported by the NEA’s Our Town initiative—but they also involve collective impact models that ensure equitable access to arts education within K-12 school systems. Whether such projects contribute to community planning and development, a new national infrastructure for folk and traditional arts, emergency preparedness and recovery, or responses to climate change, they invariably require public-private partnerships that the NEA can help to catalyze and sustain across multiple sectors.

Performance Goal 2.2.1 The NEA supports grassroots partnerships that integrate the arts with long-term strategies to heal a whole community, or to protect or revitalize its natural, cultural, and economic resources.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of unique communities, across the strategic plan period (FY 2022-2026) in which organizations were awarded NEA funds for the purpose of embedding the arts in system-wide initiatives that seek to strengthen or heal communities. <i>Source: eGMS</i>	Performance	77

Performance Goal 2.2.2 Through convenings, research, and technical assistance, the NEA strengthens the integration of the arts in system-wide initiatives.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of NEA-supported convenings, research products, and technical assistance opportunities made available to practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers seeking to integrate the arts with system-wide initiatives to strengthen and heal communities. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Goal 3. Build Capacity and Infrastructure within the Arts Sector through Knowledge-Sharing, Tools, Resources, and Evidence-Based Practices.

Arts organizations, funders, and cultural policymakers frequently look to the NEA for guidance on issues confronting the arts sector, and for research and information that can support their practice. Especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic hardships, the arts sector will require greater leadership, empirical insights, and technological capacity to rebuild better while serving all people and communities nationwide.

For the third consecutive five-year period, the NEA will launch a research agenda seeking to promote research about the value and impact of the arts. In conjunction with these projects, the NEA will support the creation and distribution of evidence-based guides, data tools, and other resources to assist cultural researchers and practitioners.

Leadership development for emerging, mid-career, and late-career arts leaders at organizations of all sizes will be essential to the arts sector's sustainability. Through grantmaking and strategic partnerships, the NEA will support these training opportunities in order for arts professionals to better navigate a shifting landscape for nonprofit arts organizations and their beneficiaries.

In response to other recent changes to the U.S. arts landscape, the agency will heighten investments in projects that use digital technology in the creation and/or delivery of art. Greater support for tech-centered artistic practice and for digital capacity-building within arts organizations also can yield positive results for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This type of support will help to bridge digital divides within different segments of the arts sector—even as it will allow artists and audiences to contribute to and benefit from technological breakthroughs in arts creation and delivery.

Strategic Objective 3.1 Support the Development of Skills and Strategies That Will Enable Arts Leaders to Manage More Effective Organizations and Agencies.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of the Deputy Chair for Programs & Partnerships

Although the NEA is primarily a grantmaking agency, it also provides leadership within the broader artsecosystem—as noted in Strategic Objective 3.2, which emphasizes research and communications in the field. Another form of assistance centers on professional development and training opportunities for arts leaders.

Several factors have contributed to a demand for new and different skills and competencies for arts leaders than may have been required in the past. These factors include the following needs: to lead arts organizations effectively in a post-COVID-19 environment; to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts; and to ensure continuity of skills acquisition and learning for successive generations of arts leaders, including those working in policy and practice at the crossroads of the arts and other sectors (e.g., health, community development, the environment). To help fulfill such needs, the NEA will support peer-to-peer learning groups and workshops for arts administrators.

Performance Goal 3.1.1 The NEA supports the development of skills and strategies that will enable arts leaders to manage more effective organizations and agencies.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity to manage more effective organizations and agencies. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Percent of participants expressing satisfaction with the quality and value of services provided through NEA-supported leadership training and technical assistance initiatives. <i>Source: Training/technical assistance feedback form</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Objective 3.2 Produce Research, Statistics, and General Information About the Arts for the Benefit of the Arts Sector and Beyond.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Research & Analysis
Office of Public Affairs

In addition to supporting leadership training and skills development within the wider arts sector, the NEA builds capacity for arts organizations through research and evaluation. Evidence-based practice guides, literature reviews, and statistical reports can assist arts organizations in more equitably serving the American public. The NEA also supports studies about the value and impact of the arts to individuals. This category of research can boost public recognition of the arts’ benefits for society—thus validating the work of artists and arts organizations in terms meaningful to funders, policymakers, and cross-sectoral partners.

Beyond using research and evaluation to measure the arts' impacts, or to promote effective practices in the arts, the NEA communicates constantly with the arts and cultural sector and the general public about a range of topics, themes, programs, and opportunities in the arts. The NEA's Office of Public Affairs publishes this content on traditional and social media platforms, facilitates interviews between NEA staff and media outlets to further promote the arts, and supports convenings, speeches, and other events featuring the NEA. The NEA's website carries up-to-date information and resources for audiences and organizations from all backgrounds.

Performance Goal 3.2.1 The NEA promotes the arts and engages with communities in every state, territory, and the District of Columbia through traditional media, social media, and the agency's website and publications.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of states and U.S. jurisdictions, including the District of Columbia, in which NEA-related articles appear in news outlets. <i>Source: Public Affairs records</i>	Performance	100%
2. Percent of states and U.S. jurisdictions whose residents interact with the NEA through the agency's website. <i>Source: Google Analytics data</i>	Performance	100%

Performance Goal 3.2.2 The NEA advances research in the arts through the social and behavioral sciences to investigate priority topics established in the agency's five-year research agenda.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of NEA website users who express satisfaction with the value of research information and publications available there. <i>Source: Pop-up survey</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Mean citation rate for projects resulting from NEA awards for research. <i>Source: Bibliometric research</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Objective 3.3 Invest in the Capacity of Arts Organizations to Support Tech-Centered Creative Practices and to Serve a Broader Public through Digital or Emergent Technology.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Media Arts Division

For decades, artists and arts organizations have experimented with the use of digital and emergent technology as a creative medium, creating a dynamic but consistently under-resourced field of artistic practice. A NEA research report, *Tech as Art: Supporting Artists Who Use Technology as a Creative Medium* (2021), analyzes this field and the historic barriers and opportunities that have defined it. The report also highlights the cross-sectoral practices of tech-centered artists, their engagement with the larger societal issues of our time—ranging from racial justice to climate change—and their capacity to network and innovate.

Although data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis suggest that web streaming and web publishing are among the highest-growth categories of all arts-related industries, the work of tech-centered artists is poorly represented across the U.S. arts funding landscape, as shown by the Tech as Art report. And yet, the inclusion of these artists in the work of arts organizations promoting different artistic disciplines has become more critical than ever, now that the COVID-19 pandemic has likely forever altered the shape of arts programming and presentation. As in-person events came to a halt in early 2020, organizations were forced to turn to digital and hybrid programming. Over the next few years, the NEA will invest in greater capacity for arts organizations and artists to harvest lessons from the pandemic and offer digital opportunities for arts participation—inclusive of hybrid programming—to reach a broader and more diverse public.

Performance Goal 3.3.1 Grantees report that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity to serve a broader public through digital or emergent technology or support tech-centered creative practices.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity to serve a broader public through digital or emergent technology. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available
2. Number of grantees reporting that NEA funding enabled them to build the capacity to support tech-centered creative practices. <i>Source: FDR</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Strategic Goal 4. Pursue and Adopt Exemplary Practices to Support the Agency’s Mission.

The NEA is a small, independent federal agency with a big impact and is committed to effectively carrying out its mission. The NEA is a responsible steward of its resources, building a workforce that is committed to its mission and service to the American people, and using resources such as technology strategically.

The NEA is the sole arts funding entity, public or private, whose funding reaches every Congressional District in all 50 states and U.S. jurisdictions, supporting activities within the arts and culture sector such as arts presentations, artist residencies, arts education and healing arts projects, research, creative placemaking, and technical assistance for organizational capacity building. With such an ambitious mission and extensive roster of programmatic activities, the NEA can succeed only because of its commitment to its employees and organizational excellence. Creating and maintaining a highly

functioning organization allows the NEA to fulfill its considerable responsibilities to the American people.

Strategic Objective 4.1 Continue to be Accountable and Transparent to the Public through Effective Operations that Promote Vigilant Stewardship of Funds.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Deputy Chair for Management & Budget
 Office of Information Technology Management
 Office of Guidelines & Panel Operations

Bearing in mind the NEA’s accountability to U.S. taxpayers, and to facilitate its mission, the NEA’s staff engage in work practices and design work systems to be effective, efficient, measurable, and transparent. The agency maintains and continually improves upon policies, processes, and systems that ensure optimal transparency and accountability. Chief among these is the NEA’s grant application review process, at the heart of which are review panels comprised of citizen panels—both experts in the various arts fields, as well as laypersons with knowledge in the relevant fields.

Performance Goal 4.1.1 The NEA is a vigilant steward of funds through accountable, transparent, and effective operations.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Annual receipt of an unmodified audit opinion. <i>Source: Administrative records</i>	Performance	Receipt of unmodified audit opinion
2. The data and deliverables submitted to USASpending.gov and other required federal data systems are certified as accurate, complete, and in accordance with government-wide data standards. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	Certified
3. Improvements to the agency’s cybersecurity posture through the development and implementation of a zero-trust architecture and by upgrading the agency’s infrastructure in alignment with the agency’s multi-year IPV6 migration plan. <i>Source: Administrative records</i>	Performance	Baseline data not available

Performance Goal 4.1.2 The NEA recruits and engages citizens as panelists who reflect the nation’s geographic and racial/ethnic diversity.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of U.S. states and jurisdictions, including the District of Columbia, represented by individuals serving on NEA panels. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Performance	100%
2. The United States’ racial/ethnic diversity is reflected in the composition of NEA panels. <i>Source: Administrative data</i>	Other	Target not required
3. Percent of NEA panelists that express satisfaction with their participation in the panel process. <i>Source: Panelist survey</i>	Other	Target not required

Strategic Objective 4.2 Foster a Skilled, Agile, Diverse, and Cohesive Workforce.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

- Office of the Deputy Chair of Management & Budget
- Office of Human Resources
- Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity

Believing that the agency’s most important asset is its people, the NEA is committed to embedding principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into the agency’s work practices, to foster a safe place for employees to thrive. The NEA also invests in training and staff recognition programs, and promotes strong employee morale and work-life balance in order to attract, develop, and retain a talented and diverse staff who are empowered and equipped to execute a shared mission and vision for the agency. The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is administered each year in part to assess employee satisfaction with their workplace experience. Specifically, the intrinsic work experience index captures employee feelings of motivation and competency relating to their role in the workplace. The employee engagement score measures conditions that lead to engagement, or employee’s sense of purpose, which is evident in their display of dedication, persistence, and effort in their work or overall attachment to their organization and its mission. Taken together these indices serve as a measurement of employee satisfaction.

Performance Goal 4.2.1. NEA employees report a positive work culture and a high degree of satisfaction working at the NEA.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Index scores for employee engagement and intrinsic work experience on OPM's annual Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. <i>Source: FEVS</i> ⁴	Performance	Employee engagement=77% Intrinsic work experience=85%

Cross-Cutting Objective (CCO): The NEA Will Model Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Arts Through All of Its Activities and Operations.

Goal Leader/Lead Office

Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity

In its founding legislation, the NEA was charged with the responsibility of widening the availability of art, particularly to historically underserved populations—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Since its creation, the NEA has dedicated resources, developed leadership initiatives, and strengthened its partnerships with SAAs and RAOs to realize the agency’s mission to foster and sustain an environment in which the arts belong to everyone in the United States.

The NEA continues to make progress in lifting barriers to arts participation across the nation. Most recently, an analysis showed that more than 43 percent of arts activities sponsored by NEA grants are held in census tracts where 20 percent or more of the population live below the poverty line. In addition, the NEA’s Partnership grants to SAAs and RAOs include funds for responding to the needs of underserved populations within states and regions.

The agency will monitor the distribution of grants in support of widening its reach among diverse demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups. It also will explore methods for tracking and enlarging the diversity of organizations represented in the NEA’s applicant pool and grants portfolio. Related factors may include the various missions and budget sizes of applicant/grantee organizations, as well as first-time applicant status, and also the geographic and other characteristics of these organizations and the communities they serve.

⁴ Adjustments to this measure may be required if FEVS indexes are changed in future years.

This cross-cutting objective also refers to the NEA’s internal operations. In its day-to-day functioning, the agency aspires to model the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and equal employment opportunity principles to ensure effective management and accountability of federal resources.

Performance Goal CCO 1.1 The NEA supports projects and partnerships that engage populations reflecting the nation’s demographic, geographic, and socioeconomic diversity.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Percent of NEA awards supporting projects that engaged diverse demographic groups. <i>Source: FDR, Census ACS data</i>	Performance	23.5%
2. Percent of subawards, through Partnership Agreements, supporting project activities that engaged diverse demographic groups. <i>Source: SAA/RAO FDR, Census ACS data</i>	Other	Target not required
3. Percent of NEA awards that supported project activities in rural areas or high-poverty neighborhoods. <i>Source: FDR, Census ACS data</i>	Performance	35%
4. Percent of subawards that supported project activities in rural areas or high-poverty neighborhoods. <i>Source: SAA/RAO FDR, Census ACS data</i>	Other	Target not required

Performance Goal CCO 1.2 The NEA will establish a model EEO program based on development of internal benchmarks.		
Indicators	Indicator Type	FY23 Target
1. Completion of six essential elements for a model EEO program as described in MD-715. ⁵ <i>Source: Administrative records</i>	Milestone	Six elements implemented

⁵ MD-715's model EEO program, pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq., and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 791 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-325).

Research and Evaluation

The NEA continuously uses research and evaluation across the four strategic goals to inform strategies and identify opportunities to improve agency performance and increase the effectiveness of its activities. The following items highlight NEA-led research and evaluation efforts that have improved the agency's knowledge of contextual factors affecting its performance plan—or that have shown how the NEA might improve performance on a specific goal or objective. Most of these studies were identified in the NEA's Learning Agenda,⁶ which is used to identify and pursue research questions pertaining to the agency's own activities and operations. Current or future research and evaluation activities are described in the agency's Strategic Plan.

Goal 1

The NEA has conducted research and evaluation studies that will inform its efforts to support opportunities for all people to participate in the arts and arts education. Research studies have enriched the agency's ability to respond to the changing nature of arts participation in the U.S. , while evaluation studies have examined outcomes associated with NEA programs enabling access to the arts. Specific studies that were completed during the term of the last strategic plan include:

[The Paths to Participation: Understanding How Art Forms and Activities Intersect](#) report (December 2020) is based on an analysis of the overlap between different art forms and genres when it comes to people's choice of arts activities. Based on findings from the Survey of Public Participation in the Arts, the brief discusses in particular the positive association between consuming the arts digitally and attending in-person arts events.

The report, [The Effects of Ticket Pricing on Arts Attendance Patterns: An Economics Literature Review \(2000-2018\)](#) (September 2020), distilled economics research, spanning nearly two decades, about the relationship between ticket pricing and public demand for visual and performing arts events.

[Why We Engage: Attending, Creating, and Performing Art](#) (2020) presented analyses of data from the 2017 Survey of Public and Participation in the Arts and the 2016 General Social Survey to identify common motivations and barriers for adults in deciding whether to participate in arts activities.

The report, [Line by Line: Transforming Student Lives and Learning with the Art of Poetry](#) (May 2020), presented findings from an evaluation study of Poetry Out Loud, a national arts education program supported by the NEA, the Poetry

⁶ Since the NEA is not a CFO agency, it is not required by law to develop a Learning Agenda. However, the agency has adopted this best practice to inform its research and evaluation activities.

Foundation, and state and jurisdictional arts agencies. The quasi-experimental study—involving data collection from ten sample schools—assessed the program’s impact on poetry appreciation and engagement, social and emotional development, and academic performance.

The report, [How Do We Read? Let’s Count the Ways](#) (March 2020), used data from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts to characterize and compare adults who read books in print only, who read books electronically, and who listen to audiobooks.

The report, [U.S. Patterns of Arts Participation: A Full Report from the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts](#) (December 2019), provided detailed statistics on adults’ patterns of arts participation, based on the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts. It compared rates of arts attendance, art-making, arts consumption via media, and literary reading among various demographic subgroups.

The report, [U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017](#) (September 2018), provided national statistics on visual and performing arts attendance and literary reading rates using the 2017 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts and compared the results with prior years (2002, 2008, and 2012).

Goal 2

Through this goal, the NEA intends to support the integration of the arts with strategies that promote the well-being and resilience of people and communities. Previous research studies have informed the agency’s planning in support of this goal, while evaluation studies have supported program improvement or assessed the effectiveness of previous grant-making activities. Specific research and evaluation studies that have informed this goal include:

Through the Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network, the agency has invested in research on the impacts and benefits – physical, emotional, and social – of creative arts therapies as innovative treatment methods. Creative Forces has been committed to the pursuit and promotion of clinically relevant biomedical and behavioral research on the effectiveness of creative arts therapies for service members, veterans, family members, and caregivers. Several strategies have been critical to the success of this research program, including the informed selection of rigorous research designs, support for multisite studies, funding of research opportunities at Creative Forces sites, and collaboration with other health/rehabilitation disciplines and partners. [Creative Forces research findings](#) inform implementation of the associated clinical program.

Evaluation of Creative Forces community-based arts programming has examined the impacts of these activities. During the pilot implementation of the Community Connections projects, an external program evaluation team conducted a study of projects to inform future Creative Forces programming and the larger field of community-based arts programming for military-connected populations. The [online presentation of study findings](#) (2020) offered lessons learned when considering how to enhance community arts engagement programs and to help guide future federal investments to support military-connected populations through community-based arts engagement programs.

The report, [Arts Strategies for Addressing the Opioid Crisis: Examining the Evidence](#) (October 2020), reviews and analyzes 20 years of evidence about the arts' use in pain management and in treatment of substance abuse disorders; it also highlights promising arts-based strategies in these practice areas.

The "[Our Town](#)" [Theory of Change and Logic Model](#) (April 2019) was developed through an iterative, collaborative process that involved analyzing existing data from Our Town grantees, including grant applications, grantee final reports, and existing case studies available on the agency's Exploring Our Town website; interviewing national experts on topics related to creative placemaking program implementation and evaluation; and conducting a scan of place-based programs and tools. In 2019, the Our Town grant guidelines and reporting requirements were rewritten to reflect the program's theory of change that situates the Our Town program as part of a national effort to increase the use of arts, design, and cultural strategies in community development across the nation.

[The Arts in Neighborhood Choice](#) report (February 2019) enumerated and described adults who value living near arts/cultural venues. It also reported data on householders who cited greater access to arts venues as a reason for having moved to their present location, and who affirmed neighborhood benefits from those venues. This report was based on analysis of the 2015 American Housing Survey—specifically an arts module that was co-authored by researchers at the National Endowment of the Arts and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Analysis: [COVID-19's Impact on Arts and Culture](#) (January 2021) was a FEMA white paper that was initiated by the NEA's Office of Research & Analysis, which also contributed statistics, analysis, and editorial content.

Goal 3

The NEA supports this goal—to build capacity and infrastructure within the arts sector through knowledge-sharing, tools, resources, and evidence-based practices—primarily

through its research program. External research about the arts' impacts on individuals and communities is supported by the NEA through its Research Grants in the Arts grant program, which offers grants for research examining the value and impact of the arts. The NEA's Research Labs program, which launched in FY 2017, funds transdisciplinary research teams. Both programs use the social and behavioral sciences to engage with the [NEA's five-year Research Agenda](#). Research studies in support of the NEA research agenda are also conducted by NEA staff and contractors. Completed research studies that have focused on the infrastructure supporting the arts and arts research include:

The report, [Tech as Art: Supporting Artists Who Use Technology as a Creative Medium](#) (June 2021), was the result of a two-year research initiative exploring the multifaceted creative practices of artists who engage with digital technologies. The research examined the creative infrastructure supporting tech-focused artistic practices and provided insight into the existing challenges and opportunities faced by artists and organizations working at the intersection of arts and technology. Tech as Art was part of an Arts & Technology Field Scan conducted by the NEA in partnership with the Ford Foundation and the Knight Foundation. This report informed the development of strategic objective 3.3.

The report, [The Art of Reopening: A Guide to Current Practices Among Arts Organizations During COVID-19](#) (January 2021), presented the results of a mixed methods study about reopening practices of arts organizations that resumed in-person programming in 2020, during the pandemic. The report presents promising tactics and insights through nine case studies.

As in previous years, the NEA partnered with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) [Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account](#) (ACPSA). The ACPSA measures the total economic output for arts and cultural industries and goods and services, as well as total employment and compensation numbers for workers in those industries. It also tallies consumer spending on arts and culture and import/export activity. The time series format of ACPSA data makes it possible for researchers, policy-makers, and industry groups to monitor short- and long-term trends in arts and cultural production. The BEA routinely publishes articles based on these estimates, while the NEA publishes [arts data profiles](#) that feature ACPSA research briefs, interactive graphics, and data tables. Also, on an annual basis, the NEA and BEA estimate and report state-level figures from the ACPSA. These data are presented in fact-sheets (one for each state), data tables, research briefs, and maps. The related [Creative Economy State Profiles](#) – a set of online dashboards that the NEA has created in partnership with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) – explores state-level ACPSA data through figures, including: value added to state economies through arts and cultural production, as well as employment and compensation figures for the creative workforce.

The [Arts and Research Partnerships in Practice](#) report (October 2020) summarized proceedings from a June 2019 gathering of 12 NEA Research Labs at the NEA. It identified challenges and opportunities for collaborative, transdisciplinary research projects in the arts and informed the revision of NEA Research Labs funding guidelines.

The report, [Living Traditions: A Portfolio Analysis of the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk & Traditional Arts Program](#) (October 2019), analyzed the agency's Folk Arts program portfolio to explore the program's geographic reach, its capacity to address historically underserved populations, and the activities and achievements of its grantees and partners. This report directly informed the development of the National Folklife Network, a new national initiative of the NEA.

The report, [Artists and Other Cultural Workers: A Statistical Portrait](#) (April 2019), presented analyses of six federal datasets—but predominantly the American Community Survey and the Current Population Survey—to capture a statistical profile of 11 artist occupations and several types of cultural workers who are non-artists.

The [Rural Arts, Design, and Innovation in America](#) (November 2017) report stemmed from a research collaboration with the Economic Research Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Analyses of data from the Rural Establishment Innovation Survey helped to quantify relationships among arts organizations, design-integrated firms, and business innovators in rural settings and inform agency outreach to rural communities.

Goal 4

The NEA rigorously reviews its management functions. The NEA Office of Inspector General (OIG) performs audits, evaluations and reviews of operations and activities of NEA programs and recipients of NEA grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts. The OIG conducts independent and objective assessments and reports on internal controls, financial management, information technology, and other systems that affect NEA programs and recipients. Audit work is conducted according to criteria and methods outlined by the Government Accountability Office's [Government Auditing Standards](#). Reviews and evaluations are performed according to criteria and methods outlined by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's [Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation](#). Reports are posted on the [OIG's Reports webpage](#).

With respect to financial management, the NEA's OIG oversees an annual audit, which encompasses an independent and thorough review to ensure the agency's financial statements accurately and completely represent the agency's financial position. The

OIG also oversees the annual review of the agency's compliance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA). The financial statement audit and FISMA review typically result in recommendations for improvement that inform the agency's strategic plan and efforts for improved programs and processes.

Human capital management reviews are essential for hiring, managing, training and retaining talented and high performing employees. To that end, the NEA regularly evaluates and acts on its human capital programs via Office of Personnel Management (OPM) audits and assessments and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) reviews. In addition, results from OPM's Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey provide important data on employee engagement, sense of inclusion, dedication to the NEA mission, and commitment to personal accountability. Surveys of panelists participating in reviews of funding applications provide information used to improve the peer review process.

Data Validation and Verification

The NEA ensures the accuracy and reliability of the performance data in its Annual Performance Report in accordance with the five data quality specifications in the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 for:

- **Means used to verify and validate measured values:** All performance data reported in the Annual Performance Report are subject to internal data verification and validation by the agency's Office of Research & Analysis (ORA). A key component of data validation is agency staff consultation. Agency staff are consulted during indicator development to assess whether data collected and measures are a true reflection of the performance being measured and have a clear relationship to the mission and strategic objectives of the agency. Data verification procedures are in place to assess data accuracy, completeness, consistency, and availability. The NEA creates an internal guidance document for performance measure reporting, including a detailed matrix of the agency's indicators, data sources, analytical methods (including formulas), and verification procedures specific to individual indicators. Prior to indicator analysis and reporting, ORA staff review datasets for completeness; missing data are identified and reported in the Annual Performance Report. Methods for handling anomalous data are established and used. In some cases, data are re-checked against source information (e.g., grantee final reports). Confirmatory analyses are undertaken to confirm findings.
- **Sources for the data:** Data sources for performance reporting include both external data collections and internal administrative data. These data are tracked and maintained in separate systems, including spreadsheets. Following review by the providing office, data are collected, reviewed, integrated, and maintained by ORA and reported in the agency's Annual Performance Report that is available

on the agency's website on its Open Government page. The NEA Data Governance Board (DGB), including representatives across the agency, meets quarterly to review and coordinate data management for the NEA.

The following data sources are used most frequently for reporting on NEA indicators are listed below. Limitations to the accuracy of data from these sources are also described.

- FDR – Final Descriptive Report. At the completion of each award, each awardee submits a Final Descriptive Report to the agency, which includes data pertaining to many of the agency's strategic objectives. FDR data are reported as submitted by grantees and are not independently verified. For performance reporting, data from the most recently completed fiscal year are used; the most recent data available from grantees' FDRs are from two years earlier, since final reports are not received until after an award's period of performance has concluded. At this time, FDRs are submitted through REACH/eGMS in two different formats: a fillable PDF form and an eGMS form (see below).
- eGMS – Electronic Grants Management System. This is the agency's internal grants management system, which acts as the system of record for the agency's entire grantmaking portfolio. eGMS includes grant application data submitted by applicants and FDR data submitted by grantees (described above); not all application and report data are independently verified.
- SPPA – Survey of Public Participation in the Arts. The SPPA is a comprehensive and detailed representative survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every five years (as part of that agency's household surveys) and provides insight into the nature and extent of Americans' participation in the arts. The most recent survey took place in 2017; data from the 2017 administration is available online at the National Archive of Data on Arts & Culture.
- ABS – Arts Basic Survey. The ABS is also conducted by the Census Bureau as a supplement to their Current Population Survey and features selected summary questions drawn from the SPPA. Although less detailed than the larger survey, the ABS provides estimates of U.S. participation in the arts during years in which the SPPA is not administered.
- **Level of accuracy required for the intended use of the data:** Performance data reported in the Annual Performance Report are used for management purposes, as a representative indicator of progress in relation to an established target or goal. The accuracy of the data is that which is considered necessary to provide a

reasonable representation of the progress made relative to a target or goal for discussion purposes, enabling the NEA senior management to determine if progress is adequate.

- **Limitations to the data at the required level of accuracy:** NEA performance data are subject to potential errors from: the use of estimations and extrapolations, especially where direct measurement is impractical and/or considered too costly; incomplete data; and/or failure to effectively employ the guidance described in the NEA's internal performance measure documentation. The most significant limitation related to grant report data is its self-reported nature. As noted above, grant data are reported as submitted by grantees and are not independently verified. In addition, since grantee report data must be extracted from PDF forms and converted into a dataset, data inaccuracies due to programming errors is possible.
- **How the agency has compensated for such limitations if needed to reach the required level of accuracy:** The measurement procedures for each performance measure used in the Annual Performance Report will be described in accompanying documentation. Submitted data are reviewed within the context of the scope and nature of the activity, plans, reports, and past experience to help confirm accuracy. Following review and verification by the submitting office, the data are reviewed within its corresponding trends and programmatic context by the ORA to determine if further review is necessary to adjust or correct the reported data before publication. Senior management and leadership consider this level of accuracy to be acceptable in their use of the data. Past experience in using the data, and historical trend and programmatic context assessments, indicate that the limitations are considered minor and compensating measures are not considered necessary.