

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is an independent federal agency that is the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide and a catalyst of public and private support for the arts. By advancing equitable opportunities for arts participation and practice, the NEA fosters and sustains an environment in which the arts benefit everyone in the United States.

BUDGET & GRANTMAKING

The NEA awards grants for projects to nonprofit organizations nationwide, as well as supports fellowships for writers and translators of world literature, and honorifics in jazz and the folk and traditional arts. The grant review process is rigorous:

- Peer-review by citizen experts and laypersons from around the country
- Review by National Council on the Arts, the agency's advisory body
- Final review and award decisions by the NEA chair

The NEA awards 40 percent of its grantmaking budget directly to the states and jurisdictions through the state and regional arts agencies, reaching millions of people in thousands of communities. The NEA requires that a portion of every state and regional partnership grant be allocated to programs reaching underserved communities.

The National Endowment for the Arts' FY 2024 appropriation of \$207 million constitutes about .003 percent of the federal budget. Approximately 80 percent of the appropriation is distributed as grants and awards to organizations and individuals across the country.

NEA grant awards typically require a dollar-to-dollar cost share/match, ensuring that NEA funds help to leverage many more public and private investments in the arts.

PARTNERSHIPS

Federal agencies and nonprofit organizations partner with the NEA on national initiatives, using the arts as a platform for enhancing the quality of life for all.

- Examples include: Creative Forces, a partnership with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs; Poetry Out Loud program, a partnership with the Poetry Foundation and state arts agencies; Musical Theater Songwriting Challenge, a partnership with the National Alliance for Musical Theatre; NEA Big Read, a partnership with Arts Midwest; Blue Star Museums, a partnership with Blue Star Families in collaboration with the Department of Defense and museums nationwide; and the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design, a partnership with the Housing Assistance Council.

FUNDING DISTRIBUTION AND IMPACT

The NEA is fully committed to ensuring that people in communities nationwide have access and opportunity to engage with the arts:

- The NEA recommends on average 2,400 grants per year.

The majority of grants (more than 60 percent) go to small and medium sized organizations (budgets up to \$2 million), which tend to support projects that benefit audiences that otherwise might not have access to arts programming.

A significant percentage of grants go to those who have fewer opportunities to participate in the arts:

- 34 percent of NEA grants take place in high-poverty neighborhoods.
- 26.3 percent of grants reach low-income audiences or underserved populations such as people with disabilities, people in institutions, and veterans.

Just as Americans are diverse in their backgrounds, so are their communities. The National Endowment for the Arts ensures that the arts thrive across the nation, including small and rural towns:

- 10.9 percent of NEA-funded projects take place in rural communities, with rural communities making up 13.7 percent of the U.S. population.
- 7.6 percent of NEA-funded projects take place in small, metropolitan communities, with small, metropolitan communities making up 8.8 percent of the U.S. population.

Approximately 2,151 unique communities are served each year through NEA grants. Around 24.3 million Americans attend a live arts event supported by the NEA, including approximately 17,735 concerts, readings, and performances, and 3,664 exhibitions. Funding from the NEA leverages more local and regional investments in the arts, and stimulates economic activity for workers, organizations, venues, businesses, neighborhoods, and communities nationwide.

RESEARCH

Research into the value and impact of the arts is a core function of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). Through accurate, relevant, and timely analyses and reports, the NEA elucidates the factors, conditions, and characteristics of the U.S. arts ecosystem and the impact of the arts on other domains of American life. In addition to conducting research, the NEA funds research through Research Grants in the Arts and NEA Research Labs.

For more about the impact of National Endowment for the Arts grants and programs on U.S. communities, please visit arts.gov and subscribe to [our newsletter](#).

The agency also presents stories about artists, arts organizations, and arts events all over the country through our [blog](#), [weekly podcasts](#), and [magazine](#).