By June 2019, the National Endowment for the Arts will have funded 12 Research Labs nationwide. The Labs are transdisciplinary research teams that use the social and behavioral sciences to investigate the relationship of the arts to one or more of the following domains:

- Health and Social/Emotional Well-Being
- Creativity, Cognition, and Learning
- Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Through multiyear partnerships with the Arts Endowment, and with the help of arts organizations and other stakeholder groups, the Labs produce research products, policy briefs, and other tools consistent with the agency’s research mission: “to promote public knowledge and understanding about the value and impact of the arts in American life.”

On June 3-4, the National Endowment for the Arts will host an All-Labs Research Summit at the agency’s headquarters in Washington, D.C. to identify cross-cutting research and logistical challenges and opportunities across the 12 Labs. The Labs personnel will learn what their peers are doing, what are some promising practices, and who might be some important stakeholders for their work. Research staff at the Arts Endowment, meanwhile, will gain insights into how more effectively to structure, administer, and monitor the Labs program.

**Day One** (June 3) features small-group discussions and report-outs about “Vision,” “Outcomes-Tracking,” “Capacity and Sustainability,” and “Technical Assistance” for the Labs. To include lunch and networking opportunities, Day One also will accommodate three panel sessions, one for each of the following topics: “Study Design and/or Recruitment Issues for Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Studies,” “Engaging Community Partners in Research and Communications,” and “Modulating Arts Research to R&D: Toward Scalability.” Selected non-Lab researchers will be invited to participate as discussants for each session.

**Day Two** (June 4) will feature three public sessions to be held in an auditorium at the Arts Endowment headquarters. Representatives from the first full cohort of Research Labs (“Class of FY 2017”) will report findings and implications of their work. The session will reconvene the “discussants” from Day One to share their perspectives on the panel topics from the first day. Following a Q&A for the four Lab speakers and the discussants, a panel of federal funders will appraise research opportunities at the intersection of the Labs’ work and their own agencies. Finally, a keynote talk by the renowned scientist and inventor Nina Kraus (of Northwestern University) on the work of her lab, Brainvolts, in investigating sound processing in the brain and the relevance of this research for music education and healthy aging.
The Arts Endowment will livestream the Day Two proceedings; in addition, the agency will commission an author-consultant to produce a report based on the entire event. This document will examine the future of a sustainable Research Labs network for the arts in the United States.

Here are all the Research Labs that will be represented at the event, by year of award:

**Fiscal Year 2017**

**University of Arkansas** (Fayetteville, AR): This Lab is conducting a large-scale experiment on the effects of multiple field trips on students’ social/emotional skills. Researchers are examining potential effects of elementary school students in a large urban school district who have attended up to three culturally-enriching field trips at The Woodruff Arts Center (in Atlanta) in a single school year. Another study is evaluating the longitudinal achievement and non-cognitive benefits of multiple cultural trips for students to the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

**Drexel University** (Philadelphia, PA): The Arts Research on Chronic Stress (ARCS) Lab is studying arts-based approaches to promoting health and well-being for caregivers of cancer patients. A partner entity for the Lab is the Radiation Oncology Department at the University of Pennsylvania. Separately, Drexel investigators are examining the effects of creative music therapy on chronic pain management. For its next phase of activity, the Lab will incorporate arts research involving military health care facilities, the study of music therapy as a non-pharmacological alternative for treating post-surgical pain, and a pilot study of art therapy for pediatric cancer patients.

**University of Iowa** (Iowa City, IA): This Lab has consolidated literature and extant knowledge at the intersection of rural arts and culture, entrepreneurship, and innovation—to provide future researchers, funders, and policy-makers with greater evidence about the arts’ role in economic well-being for rural communities. The heart of this Lab’s approach is a “Comprehensive Rural Wealth” framework to complement standard methodologies for tracking the arts’ value to rural communities.

**Vanderbilt University** (Nashville, TN): In partnership with Northwestern University, NORC at the University of Chicago, and the Arts & Business Council of Greater Nashville, this Lab is investigating connections between arts-based creativity and other forms of creativity such as problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and social networking. Core studies of the Lab include a national survey of creativity in the United States and a mixed-methods study of Nashville artists.

**Fiscal Year 2018**

**University of California San Francisco** (San Francisco, CA): Researchers are conducting studies to identify neural substrates for creativity across a range of art forms. The Lab’s principal activity will involve collecting and analyzing data from “genius improvisers” in music, the visual arts, and comedy. Participants in these three art forms will perform an improvisational task, compared with an appropriate control task, with their brains scanned with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Partners include SF Jazz, The San Francisco Art Institute, Second City, and Speechless.

**George Mason University** (Fairfax, VA): Working with Virginia Repertory Theatre and the Mason Community Arts Academy, this Lab focuses on arts engagement, child development, and education. Studies are examining the outcomes of arts education in low-income, ethnically diverse high school students; the effect of theater training on social skills; and students’ sense of agency. The Lab is
comprised of three co-investigators, representing different areas of expertise as part of the new George Mason University Arts Research Center (“MasonARC”).

**Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis** (Indianapolis, IN): In partnership with the Center for Cultural Innovation (San Francisco), the Arts Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab will conduct multiple studies. These include an analysis of the resilience of freelance artists in comparison with that of independent contractors in non-arts sectors, based on U.S. Census Bureau statistics, and measured in terms of employment and income. Another study will explore problem-solving processes in group settings and whether the inclusion of artists in such groups can foster civic innovation.

**Vanderbilt University Medical Center** (Nashville, TN): As part of its research portfolio, this Lab will conduct a randomized waitlist control trial to assess the social and emotional effects of music on autistic children and their parents. The Lab also will administer a national survey of music engagement by families with and without autistic children, as well as host quarterly Music Research Forums to promote the development and refinement of the Lab’s studies. Also in preparation is a Music Engagement Toolkit with online training modules to build capacity for arts organizations and musicians who work with children with developmental disabilities.

**Fiscal Year 2019**

**University of California at San Diego** (San Diego, CA): The Lab will launch a series of “Early Academic Readiness and Learning Intervention” (EARLI) studies that will test the influence of various school-day musical interventions on early childhood development outcomes such cognitive, affective, social, academic, and music skills. Partners include San Diego Children’s Choir and the Vista Unified School District.

**University of Colorado Denver** (Denver, CO): In partnership with Children’s Hospital in Colorado and the Lighthouse Writers Workshop, this Lab will develop and test a series of creative arts therapy programs designed to build resilience among critical care health professionals. The programs will use qualitative, mixed-method, and randomized controlled study designs and will integrate visual arts therapy, music therapy, dance/movement therapy, and writing/poetry therapy.

**Rice University** (Houston, TX): Addressing the need for low-cost, non-pharmacological interventions for cognitively-impaired patients and their caregivers, this Lab will use brain imaging studies to examine older patients with mild cognitive impairment who do or do not take part in an intensive music course featuring listening, theory, creativity, and performance. The Lab will partner with Musiqa, a Houston contemporary music ensemble that offers free educational programs.

**Texas Tech University** (Lubbock, TX): Its College of Visual and Performing Arts will advance a series of research projects as part of its Arts in Medicine Initiative. First on the list is the testing and development of a visual arts-based virtual reality app to improve speech and language re-acquisition in stroke survivors with aphasia. Nonprofit arts partners include Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts and the Museum of Texas Tech University.