



**National
Endowment
for the Arts**
arts.gov

Spring 2016 Grant Announcement, Research: Art Works

Through Research: Art Works, the NEA funds research that investigates the impact of the arts on individuals and groups.

Number of Grants: 18 Total Dollar Amount: \$320,000

Arizona State University

\$15,000 Tempe, AZ

To support a study that will examine factors accounting for key transitions in the careers of arts graduates. Some of the factors that the study will consider are post-secondary educational success and entry to or exit from employment in the arts. To be conducted in partnership with Emory University, the study will use data from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP), a national survey that documents the experiences and attributes of more than 90,000 arts alumni.

Carnegie Hall Society, Inc. (aka Carnegie Hall)

\$20,000 New York, NY

To support an evaluation of The Lullaby Project, a personalized music intervention for at-risk pregnant women. This mixed-methods study will be conducted in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University. Women will be assigned randomly into an intervention or control group to test whether participants in The Lullaby Project show significantly improved ratings of maternal attachment with their child, reductions in psychological symptoms (e.g., anxiety and depression), and parental stress in comparison with the control group. Also in The Lullaby Project, participating mothers will work with musicians to compose original lullabies for their babies; the mothers and musicians then will refine and record the lullabies, which the mothers will share in a group setting.

Children's Mercy Hospital (aka Children's Mercy)

\$18,000 Kansas City, MO

To support a study that examines whether visual artists--working with biomedical researchers--can depict complex research concepts commonly used in biomedical research through images and illustrations effectively. Specific research concepts will be vetted and assigned to Kansas City Art Institute students enrolled in a medical illustration course, who will design and refine medical illustrations through an iterative process involving a crowdsourcing mechanism to rate the illustrations' effectiveness. Additionally, the illustrations will be tested in focus groups comprising non-English-speaking parents and parents with children enrolled in a large, urban daycare center serving the needs of homeless and socioeconomically disadvantaged families.

Dancing Classrooms Inc. (aka Dancing Classrooms)

\$18,000 New York, NY

To support a study examining the potential effects of ballroom dance instruction on the social and emotional learning of elementary school students. The study will focus on children who have various disabilities such as emotional disturbances, physical disabilities, and autism. Working with students in the New York City public school system, researchers will use a mixed-methods study design with a comparison group to test whether ballroom dance instruction is related to improvements in students' social and emotional learning and related

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skills and behaviors (such as communication, socialization, and self confidence) over the course of the ten-week program. The study will build on research previously conducted through an i3 grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Duke University

\$18,000 Durham, NC

To support a nationwide evaluation of the organizational characteristics and social networks of El Sistema USA (ESUSA) orchestral training programs. ESUSA programs offer after-school music instruction to historically underserved populations. Duke University's Social Science Research Institute will work with ESUSA program members to analyze each program's website, to survey and interview key program staff, and to create visual representations of the social networks enabled by each program. The mixed-methods study thus will identify organizational traits associated with ESUSA's intended outcomes of artistic excellence and community engagement.

Global Writes, Inc.

\$12,000 Yonkers, NY

To support an evaluation of a literacy-based arts integration model in a group of elementary and middle schools in the Bronx to determine whether student participation is associated with "21st century skills" development. Previously implemented with support from the U.S. Department of Education, the "Bronx Writes" model incorporates poetry writing, the performing arts, and communications technology. The study will use a quasi-experimental, matched-comparison group to investigate outcomes such as greater skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, initiative, entrepreneurship, curiosity, and imagination.

New School University

\$25,000 New York, NY

To support a series of studies examining how literary fiction and art films compare with popular texts and commercial movies in their ability to influence people's social perceptions of others. The studies will test whether the different forms of fiction can be classified based on the books' and films' thematic focus and stylistic characteristics. Researchers hypothesize that literary texts will explore the mental states of oneself and of others, while art films will demonstrate a longer average shot time, and that both types of artwork will show greater complexity of characters than do popular, commercial books or movies. The studies also will examine whether literary fiction and arts films yield substantially different understandings of other people than do their popular/commercial counterparts, and whether either type of artwork is related to social perception biases such as stereotyping.

New York University

\$25,000 New York, NY

To support a randomized, controlled trial examining the effects of DE-CRUIT. The community-based Shakespeare theater program serves military veterans and is designed to address post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Program outcomes will be assessed using a dynamic waitlisted control design, including pre- and post-assessments, in a sample of veterans experiencing PTSD. Researchers will test whether participants in DE-CRUIT--at the Veterans Center for the Performing Arts (VCPA)--show significant changes in symptoms of PTSD, such as reductions in depression and improvements in self efficacy and executive functioning compared to a control group, as well as significant changes in neurophysiological variables through electroencephalography (EEG).

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Project Row Houses

\$15,000 Houston, TX

To support a study that will evaluate the effectiveness of local artists and community-based arts organizations in engaging a group of economically-disadvantaged residents in Houston. In addition, the study will consider the role that the arts organizations have in improving the residents' civic behavior and perceptions of neighborhood. Investigators will use a community-based participatory research approach and repeated measures to examine changes in variables such as residents' beliefs in their collective ability to affect the future of their communities.

Teachers College, Columbia University

\$16,000 New York, NY

To support a secondary analysis of school and student data from a large-scale study that examined the effects of arts instruction on the cognitive, social, and personal competencies of elementary and middle school students. This project will analyze data from the Champions of Change study (1999), "Learning In and Through the Arts," for a detailed understanding of student outcomes as related to 1) individual art forms; 2) the methods of instruction within those art forms; 3) the organization of the instruction (such as integrated, discrete or combined); and 4) providers of instruction (such as arts specialists, teaching artists, and classroom teachers). Data will include measures of creativity, self-concept, and school climate, as well as interviews, site observations and surveys.

Texas A & M University

\$18,000 College Station, TX

To support a study investigating how interactive art technology is related to social connectedness and well-being among older adults at an assisted living home and at a local art gallery. During the course of several months, participants will learn to use interactive art technology that involves physical computing techniques and everyday materials such as papers and fabrics to create greeting cards for family members. Using pre- and post-assessments, researchers will measure older adults' psychological well-being, their interest in art, and their confidence in using new technology, compared with results from a control group that has been assigned to traditional arts-and-crafts activities.

Trustees of Boston College

\$20,000 Chestnut Hill, MA

To support a randomized, controlled study that will evaluate the effects of intensive, instrumental music training on at-risk kindergarteners. Researchers will focus on the students' cognitive and affective development and their attitudes toward school. Within a longitudinal sample of the participating after-school programs, the researchers will examine differences in program quality, curriculum, classroom climate, and teacher background, in an attempt to find differences related to student outcomes such as greater executive function and self-perception.

University of Dayton

\$10,000 Dayton, OH

To support a study examining the relationships between arts attendance and a variety of pro-social and civic behaviors and attitudes. The study will rely on the General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative sample of U.S. households--which in 2012, included several arts and cultural variables. This project will test hypotheses about the degree to which arts participation is related to civic outcomes at the individual level.

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University of Maryland at College Park

\$12,000 College Park, MD

To support a study on the availability of arts education in U.S. high schools. The study will analyze follow-up data from the High School Longitudinal Study (2009) from the National Center for Education Statistics, which includes course catalogs and school profiles for a nationally representative sample of U.S. high schools, in addition to several independent, representative state samples. Using descriptive statistics, the national availability of high school courses in visual arts, music, dance, and theater will be estimated. Using inferential statistics, researchers also will investigate the relationship between schools' art course offerings and schools' sociodemographic characteristics, such as geography, concentration of poverty, and student racial and ethnic diversity.

University of South Florida

\$25,000 Tampa, FL

To support a study examining how a technology-based musical training program prepares early learners. This project will experimentally evaluate the effects of a preschool program focused on developing creativity, gross motor skills (drums using a computer tablet), and vocal skills. Researchers will study whether participation in the program is related to student outcomes such as working memory, executive functioning, inhibition, and auditory processing in at-risk young children. Participants will be recruited from local preschools and Head Start centers and will be randomly assigned to one of three groups: a music group, a building blocks group, and a no-treatment group. Researchers will use pre- and post-assessments to test whether children in the music group significantly improve in outcomes compared with the other groups.

University of Wisconsin at Madison

\$18,000 Madison, WI

To support a study examining whether healthcare trainees who learn improvisational theater techniques show greater empathy toward team members and others in a healthcare setting. Using standardized assessments and semi-structured interviews, this mixed-methods study will measure participants' accuracy of identifying emotion through facial expressions, perspective-taking, and empathic behaviors, both pre- and post-intervention. Changes in outcomes will be compared with those for a control group that will be assigned research articles about the impact of empathy on healthcare practice.

Wayne State University

\$10,000 Detroit, MI

To support a study examining the locational patterns of cultural organizations in southeast Michigan and the accessibility of cultural resources to different population groups. This study designs and implements an index of access to arts and cultural institutions, accounting for admissions policy, the physical characteristics of a location, and transportation options. Researchers will explore the geographical, institutional, and social barriers limiting access to arts and cultural organizations, and will develop recommendations for improving this access.

Yale University

\$25,000 New Haven, CT

To support a study of the relationship between arts participation and psychological resilience and well-being. Researchers will test for differences between adults with professional training in the arts, and adults who lack such training, by examining a variety of factors such well-being, distress intolerance, emotion regulation, and personality. The team also will use latent class modeling to see whether there are different cluster profiles among artists and non-artists based on their levels of vulnerability and psychological resources.

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