



## *Big Read* Grantee/Partner Interviews

[Case-Study Sites Only—*To Be Adapted for Project Partners in those Sites*]

Note: These aren't necessarily questions to be strictly followed, but rather points that should be covered during the conversation.

- (1) Background. I know a little about your organization from reading your proposal, but maybe you can tell me a little more about your mission as it relates to literary reading?
  - a. Have you done community reading programs before? If so, briefly describe what you've done. (Probe for books read, activities, partnerships, publicity, audiences served. The idea is to get an overview of past experience, not a comprehensive picture.)
  - b. What attracted you to *The Big Read*? How does your *Big Read* project fit with your organization's mission and other programs you've done?
  - c. Why do you think your project was selected for *The Big Read* program? What program attributes might have made a difference?
  - d. Was this book a good choice for your community? Did the theme resonate with readers? Was the level about right for a wide range of readers?
  
- (2) Program implementation status.
  - a. What have you done to implement your program so far? Probe for information about:
    - Forming and managing partnerships with other community organizations, public officials, businesses, etc.
    - Working with schools, teachers, and students
    - Outreach to diverse populations
    - Working with the media and managing public relations, including use of PSAs. How extensively did you use the PSAs provided by the project? [If used] How successful do you think they've been in generating interest and attendance at events? Have you had feedback from participants about PSAs?
    - Fund-raising and in-kind donations
    - Planning and implementing activities
    - Collecting evaluation data, either required for *The Big Read* or collected informally for organizational use
  - b. Has you changed any program activities or goals since you began? If so, how and why? Probe for changes made based on:
    - Information from the Orientation
    - Conversations with/assistance from Arts Midwest or NEA staff
    - Conversations with current or past NEA grantees
    - Feedback from program events

(3) Assessment of program activities

- a. What have been your main successes so far? What things made those successes possible (funding, staff, other resources, etc.)?
- b. Has this been fun?
- c. What have been the project's main challenges? [Probe: in attracting certain audiences, in making the partnership(s) successful, in meeting grant requirements, etc.] How have you addressed those challenges? If you haven't been able to address them, what resources might help you do so?
- d. If you could start this project over again tomorrow, what would you do differently? (Imagine that you're asked to give a presentation on this year's work at next year's *Big Read* orientation. What lessons learned would you share with others?)
- e. Do you feel that you've built capacity for your organization—to, e.g., scale your programs to include more or different partners, participants, or activities?
- f. Do you feel that you've had adequate resources (e.g., money, staff, materials) to carry out your program and build capacity?
- g. What support from Arts Midwest and NEA has been most useful? How could Arts Midwest and NEA improve their support?

(4) Do you think you've met your personal or community goals for the project? What about the lofty goals of the project—what impact do you think your *Big Read* has had/will have on literary reading?

(5) Is there anything more you'd like to say about your experience with *The Big Read*?