

Supporting Statement – Section A

Participant Evaluations for “Operation Homecoming: Writing the Wartime Experience”

Background and Context

“Operation Homecoming: Writing the Wartime Experience” presents writing workshops for U.S. Armed Forces active duty troops and veterans of both current and past conflicts. Workshops generally will last four to six weeks, and will take place at approximately 25 sites around the country, including military installations, veterans’ centers and hospitals. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Southern Arts Federation (SAF) in Atlanta, GA, to administer the writing workshops and oversee the evaluation process. Evaluation surveys will be completed by workshop participants.

A.1 Necessity of Information Collection

As a federal agency, the National Endowment for the Arts evaluates its programs on a regular basis. Included in the terms of our cooperative agreement with Southern Arts Federation is a component requiring evaluation of the Operation Homecoming writing workshops. A private firm, the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice at Virginia Tech, was selected to conduct the evaluation. The analysis of the evaluations will provide NEA and SAF with valuable information for the design of future writing programs, whether they continue Operation Homecoming or focus on other populations.

A.2 Needs and Uses of Data

A brief paper evaluation form will be distributed to all workshop participants. They are not required to complete the evaluation, although we anticipate that most participants will do so. Evaluation forms will be returned as soon as they are completed. The goal of the evaluation is to determine the participants’ reactions to the workshops, what they perceive to be strengths and weaknesses of the program, and collection of information that can be used in future program development.

A.3 Uses of Information Technology

The evaluation will be done on paper forms. Results will be collated and analyzed by SAF and the Institute for Cultural Policy and Practice at Virginia Tech.

A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication

This is the only evaluation that will be requested of Operation Homecoming workshop participants.

A.5 Minimizing Burden in Small Businesses or Small Entities

No small businesses or small entities will be affected by this evaluation.

A.6 Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This is a one-time evaluation period that will coincide with Operation Homecoming writing workshops. The evaluation form is brief, and the burden to participants is minimal.

A.7 Special Circumstances

A.8 Public Comment and Consultations Outside the Agency

A notice was published in the Federal Register to solicit comments on the evaluation form prior to this OMB clearance request. No public comments were received at the NEA in response to the notice.

A.9 Payment to Respondents

No payments are planned.

A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality

No names or other identifying information will be requested of evaluation respondents.

A.11 Questions of a Sensitive Nature

In general, questions are not of a sensitive nature. In any case, there is no identifying information that could trace an evaluation back to any particular respondent.

A.12 Estimates of Hour Burden for Data Collection

We estimate that completion of the evaluation form will take no more than 15 minutes. We anticipate approximately 250 respondents.
 $250 \times 15 = 3750$ minutes (62.5 hours)

A.13

There will be no cost to respondents. Evaluations will be collected on-site.

A.14

The total cost of this evaluation to the Federal Government is \$22,500.

A.15

Not applicable.

A.16 Timeline and Publication

The evaluations will be completed by participants in the Operation Homecoming writing workshops. We anticipate that the workshops will run from January through August 2009.

Southern Arts Federation and the evaluation firm at Virginia Tech will analyze the data on an ongoing basis. A final report will be submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts following the completion of the project. We do not expect to publish the final report.

A.17 Exemption to Display Certification

Not seeking exemption.

A.18 Exceptions to Certifications

There are no exceptions to the certifications set forth in Item 19.