

NEA Study of Outdoor Arts Festivals Case Study Site Selection Criteria

1. In order to provide information relevant to NEA's full constituency, the set of sites selected should represent NEA's six U.S. regions. Therefore, we will select one site from each region. NEA's regions include:
 - New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)
 - Mid Atlantic (DE, DC, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VI, VA, WV)
 - South (AL, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN)
 - Midwest (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD, WI)
 - Mid-America (AR, KS, MO, NE, OK, TX)
 - West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY)

2. The set of sites selected must represent the study's key research categories so that comparisons between festivals of different types can be made. In this study, those categories are:
 - Governance structure (public vs. private)
 - Price (free vs. fee-based)
 - Explicit mission outside arts presenting (no vs. yes)

These are primary selection criteria.

3. The set of sites selected should represent the disciplines supported by the NEA. Therefore, we will strive to select a set of sites that includes programming in:
 - performing arts
 - visual arts
 - folk/traditional arts
 - media arts
 - literature
 - design

The NEA serves communities with cultural infrastructure in a range of sizes and capacities. The set of sites selected should represent this range and should include festivals that serve urban and rural populations, city-wide and neighborhood audiences, popular and community-specific art forms.

These are balancing criteria.

4. The set of sites selected should be responsive to input received from experts around the U.S. during an initial request for nominations conducted by the NEA. If the set compiled using the above criteria appears to have any critical gaps in terms of characteristics of population served, artistic forms or styles presented, or some other characteristic deemed relevant and important by the research team, one or two additional sites may be selected from that list of nominations.

These are balancing criteria.

5. Festivals selected must be:
 - able to support research (with staff and technical capacity)
 - more than 5 years old

These are deciding criteria.

Possible sites have been suggested for consideration through preliminary interviews conducted by NEA with experts in the arts field and by those with special knowledge of festivals in the U.S.

Process:

The process for evaluating sites is as follows:

1. Gather suggestions for festivals to consider as research sites.
2. Categorize festivals by NEA region.
3. Within regions, assess each festival based on primary criteria of governance structure, price and mission.
4. Note balancing criteria.
5. Produce final list using deciding criteria.