

Supporting Statement A: Annual Arts Benchmarking Survey

Introduction

This request is for clearance to conduct an Annual Arts Benchmarking Survey (AABS) in 2013 and 2014, as well as two advance pilot studies. The survey will be conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau as a supplement to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey. The AABS would be conducted for the first time in February 2013, and annually thereafter in years that the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is not conducted. One of the strengths of the AABS survey is that it will both complement and supplement the information collected by the SPPA. The SPPA, conducted approximately every five years, is the field's premier repeated cross-sectional survey of individual attendance and involvement in arts and cultural activity. The AABS questionnaire will be much shorter than the SPPA, consisting of 10 to 12 questions that will be used to track arts participation over time. As with the SPPA, the AABS data will be circulated to interested researchers and will be the basis for a range of NEA reports and independent research publications. Reports on this data will be made publicly available on the NEA's website. The AABS will provide annual primary knowledge on the nature and extent of participation in the arts in the United States. These data will also be used by the NEA as a performance measure, identified in its FY 2012 – FY 2016 strategic plan.¹

A. Justification

A.1. Necessity of Information Collection

The NEA, pursuant to its mandate “to support projects and productions that will encourage public knowledge, education, understanding and appreciation of the arts” (USC20, Section 954 (5)) and “to develop and implement a practical system of national information and data collection and public dissemination on the arts and their audiences, including trends in audience participation” (USC 20, Section 954 (q)), has entered into an interagency agreement with the Census Bureau to conduct the Annual Arts Benchmarking Survey (AABS). The Census Bureau is authorized to collect data under Title 13, United States Code, Section 182 (see Attachment A).

As a national survey, the AABS will serve as a sound basis on which to make annual estimates of participation rates in the various art forms asked on the survey. National data from the AABS will supplement SPPA data which appear regularly in the Statistical Abstract of the United States. The AABS data will also provide information on the characteristics of the population participating in the arts. In addition, the AABS gathers information on the characteristics of adults not participating in the arts. Given that the AABS will be collected on an annual basis, the AABS will provide trend data that will

¹ See measure 2.2.1 “Percent of Adults Experiencing Art during the NEA’s Most Recent General Population Survey Period,” <http://www.nea.gov/about/Budget/NEAstrategicPlan2012-2016.pdf>

help policymakers and arts administrators make decisions using more reliable and recent information. In addition, these data will be used by the NEA as one of the critical performance measures (“percent of adults experiencing art”) to track its progress in meeting its goal to “Engage the Public with Diverse and Excellent Art” as described in the NEA’s FY 2012 – 2016 Strategic Plan.

A.2. Needs and Uses of the Data

The AABS will provide measures of participation in the arts from a nationally representative sample of adults ages 18 and older. The information to be collected from adults includes attendance at live arts events, participation through performing or creating art, reading, and visiting historic parks, art museums, or galleries. Since access to the arts is a major agency goal, measuring the depth and frequency of arts participation is of critical importance.

The sample design is such that, in addition to the capability of making national estimates, it will also be possible to generate estimates for sub-regions of the nation and for individual states and large metropolitan areas². Thus, policymakers and arts administrators at the national, regional, state, and local levels are able to study the patterns of participation across various population subgroups and to look for correlates of participation in artistic and other cultural activities. The data from this study will better enable arts administrators to make essential policy decisions based on such things as the size and characteristics of current and potential arts audiences in 2013. Publications based on this data will be available to the public on the NEA website³, where studies on the SPPA data can also be found.

The AABS will be an annual study that will complement the ongoing assessment of the arts leisure-time activities that began with the 1982 SPPA and was followed with the 1985, 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2008 SPPA surveys. The SPPA will be conducted again in 2012. The long term goal is to continue to conduct the SPPA every five years with the AABS survey occurring in each of the four years in between rounds of the SPPA. The AABS will alternate between asking questions about attendance and arts learning with questions about creating or performing arts. Therefore, every five years, users of these arts data will have three separate measures of arts attendance and arts learning, as well as three separate measures of creating and performing arts.

These data allow arts administrators to assess how the demand for the arts is changing over time, and how the nature of adults’ participation in the arts changes over time. Data

² Two such studies are:

Come as You Are: Informal Arts Participation in Urban and Rural Communities (March 2010) <http://www.nea.gov/research/Notes/100.pdf>

State and Regional Differences in Arts Participation: A Geographic Analysis of the 2008 SPPA (December 2009) <http://www.nea.gov/research/Notes/99.pdf>

³ <http://www.nea.gov/research/index.html>

from previous SPPA surveys have been widely used by policymakers and scholars because of their unique scope and statistical precision. The AABS will help improve on the SPPA in two distinct ways. First, by benchmarking key art forms, the AABS will free the SPPA from this task, providing more flexibility in measuring new or redefined art forms and thereby addressing a recurring criticism of the SPPA. Second, the annual estimates from the AABS will help users of SPPA data assess whether changes in the SPPA participation estimates are more likely a short-term phenomenon (based, for instance, on the economy or a major current event) or a long-term shift in participation.

A.3. Use of Information Technology

The benchmarking questions are designed to obtain the required information while keeping respondent burden to a minimum. The proposed items and interviewer procedures were developed over years of consultation with the Census Bureau, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and other government agencies. The use of computer-assisted personal and telephone interviewing is deemed the most appropriate collection methodology.

A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

A couple of surveys have some questions regarding participation in the arts, such as the General Social Survey (sponsored by the National Science Foundation), which periodically includes a handful of arts participation questions in its survey. However, there is no existing survey that allows for tracking participation in the arts over time and analysis by demographic and geographic subgroups.

A.5. Minimizing Burden in Small Businesses or Small Entities

Not applicable. The collection of public participation in the arts information does not involve small businesses or other small entities.

A.6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

The goal of NEA is to conduct the AABS on an annual basis, alternating between asking questions about attendance and arts learning with questions about creating or performing arts. This will enable policymakers and arts administrators make decisions using more reliable and recent information.

A.7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances that apply to the AABS.

A.8. Public Comment and Consultations Outside the Agency

A notice was published in the Federal Register (page 32992) on June 7, 2011, to solicit comments on the benchmarking survey prior to submission of this OMB clearance request. (A copy of this notice is in Attachment B.) No public comments were received in response to this notice. The second Federal Register Notice was published on September 2, 2011 (pp. 54807-54808). (A copy of this notice is in Attachment C.)

The AABS questions are essentially from the 2012 SPPA questionnaire and were developed by an NEA internal team in consultation with selected experts in survey methodology, arts management, and cultural policy research. The 2012 SPPA questionnaire was developed by an extensive advisory panel of academicians and users of national arts data.

The AABS survey instruments are included in the appendix (Attachments D and E). The surveys will be conducted on a rotating basis: the survey with questions on arts attendance and arts learning will be conducted in FY 2013 and FY 2015. The survey with questions on arts creation and performance will be conducted in FY 2014.

A.9. Paying Respondents

The Census does not make any payments or provide any gifts to individuals participating in the CPS.

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

During the actual AABS, the Census Bureau will collect the supplement data in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the OMB Circular A-130. Each sample household receives an advance letter approximately one week before the start of the initial CPS interview (see Attachment F). The letter includes the information required by the Privacy Act of 1974, explains the voluntary nature of the survey, and states the estimated time required for participating in the survey. Interviewers must ask if the respondent received the letter and, if not, provide a copy and allow the respondent sufficient time to read the contents. Also, interviewers provide households with the pamphlet *How the Census Bureau Keeps Your Information Strictly Confidential*, which further states the confidentiality assurances associated with this data collection effort and the Census Bureau's past performance in assuring confidentiality (see Attachment G). All information given by respondents to Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 (see Attachment A). Each Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to that effect and is subject to a jail penalty or substantial fine if he/she discloses any information given to him or her.

A.11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

The AABS does not include any questions of a sensitive nature.

A.12. Estimate of Hour Burden

The estimated annual respondent burden is 1,220 hours. This is based on an average 4-minute interview for each of the 18,000 persons age 18 years and older in the supplement universe for which data will be collected, and also includes the 300 persons that will be interviewed in an advance pilot study to test the questionnaire. This estimate was based on the time required to answer similar questions in past Public Participation in the Arts Supplements, and a pilot study for the 2012 SPPA questionnaire conducted in the summer of 2011.

The actual respondent burden is dependent upon the size of the household and the characteristics of its occupants. In some households two supplement questionnaires will be asked.

A.13. Estimate of Cost Burden

There are no costs to respondents other than that of their time to respond.

A.14. Cost to Federal Government

The estimated cost to the government of the supplement on public participation in the arts is \$220,000 per year, which will be borne by the NEA. The CPS program is anticipated to cost \$91 million in FY 2013. Those costs are borne by the Census Bureau, the BLS, and other government agencies.

A. 15 Reasons for Program Changes

The AABS benchmarking survey is a new data collection that will provide baseline data for comparison with future AABS and SPPA surveys.

A.16. Project Schedule

The AABS Arts Attendance and Arts Learning questions (Attachment D) will be pilot-tested with randomly selected adults from 300 households in fall 2011. The finalized instrument and instructions will be delivered to the Census Bureau in January 2012.

Main data collection for the first AABS survey (arts attendance and arts learning) will occur in February 2013, since it will be a supplement to the February 2013 CPS. Processing of this supplement will commence in March 2013. The public use file will be released in the summer of 2013. A summary report from NEA will be available in January 2014.

The AABS Arts Creation and Performance questions (Attachment E) will be pilot-tested with randomly selected adults from 300 households in fall 2012. The finalized instrument and instructions will be delivered to the Census Bureau in January 2013. Main data collection for the first AABS (for arts creation and performance) will occur in February 2014, since it will be a supplement to the February 2014 CPS. Processing of this supplement will commence in March 2014. The public use file will be released in the summer of 2014. A summary report from NEA will be available in January 2015.

A.17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

This does not apply.

A.18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.