

National Endowment for the Arts Supporting Statement Clearance Request for NEA Local Arts Agency Census

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Potential Respondent Universe and Sample Selection Method

The potential respondent universe for the survey includes all Local Arts Agencies (LAAs). LAAs can take as many different forms as there are communities, and the NEA has identified approximately 5,000 organizations qualifying as LAAs in the country. As discussed above, the lists have been culled, de-duplicated, and verified by Americans for the Arts in partnership with the NEA. The Americans for the Arts database alone contained more than 3,000 LAAs. With the addition of the NEA grant applicant lists, Cultural Data Project information from eleven states, 50 State Arts Agency and eight Regional Arts Organizations lists, Urban Institute, and IRS Business Master File lists, the universe of LAAs becomes approximately 5,000 unique entities that will be invited to participate in the study.

This collection does not provide for sampling. The survey is being made available to all LAAs in order to reduce the burden on any particular one, and to provide for the greatest sample size possible to help understand the breadth of the organizations. Because participation by respondents is optional, the most successful respondent targeting / recruitment methods require direct and continuous communication from the NEA, including email reminders generated by the survey software as well as the direct-mail solicitation letters described above, which also reduce burden by providing links to the Quick Start Guide. It is also imperative that these letters include the value the data will have to the participants and to the field once it is analyzed, thereby increasing response rate—and effectiveness of the survey overall. We expect this web-based functionality to increase participation.

2. Information Collection Procedures

All known LAAs (approximately 5,000) will be invited to participate in the LAA Census survey. During the survey period, if a new LAA is discovered, every effort will be made to incorporate their participation in the survey. Those who come forward, either through the dedicated web page or through other channels, will be cross-referenced with the existing list to ensure lack of duplication, or only then will be added to the full database, coded as a LAA, and sent a unique survey link. After the survey period closes, they will automatically be added to future survey lists. For those LAAs whose primary contacts have email addresses, an invitation email will be sent with a unique link to a secure survey website. All LAAs, including those whose primary contacts do not have email addresses on file, will be sent a series of solicitation letters. These letters will also include a unique link and explain how the survey can be downloaded and filled out by hand, if for any reason there is a need for a paper version.

Participating LAAs will be encouraged to visit the dedicated webpage housed on the Americans for the Arts website to download and review the Quick Start Guide prior to opening the unique

survey link. This guide will prepare participants with the materials they will need and the human resources they may need to tap in order to fully complete the survey. This preparation will drastically reduce the burden on the participant and will simultaneously increase the probability of completion of the survey. Once the participants are ready, they will be able to use their unique links to access a secure survey instrument.

The collection of information will be primarily web-based, and therefore most responses will be completed through electronic submission. Participants who submit paper copies will have their answers entered into the survey instrument through their unique URLs by Americans for the Arts Research Services staff.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with Non-Response

Since the decision to participate in the LAA Census survey is voluntary, to maximize LAA participation, the NEA will offer respondents early access to the analyzed aggregated data as well as access to webinars explaining how to use and understand these data. The NEA expects that the promise of receiving these data, which could be used for internal programming and strategic planning purposes, will make LAAs feel more invested—the more responses received, the better and more useful the data will be. There is no other survey that can provide this level of depth and breadth, and certainly no survey that could be feasible to provide even close to this detail run by a single LAA. As a result, this survey will provide a comparative measure that has not and will not likely be matched. LAAs stand to gain the most from a high level of participation from the field, so the NEA plans to capitalize on this by encouraging participation through the benefits the LAAs themselves will reap (none of which include any kind of advantage if they were to apply subsequently for funding from the NEA or Americans for the Arts).

In addition to promoting the benefits to the field, the NEA will also employ a number of solicitation techniques to improve response rate. First, all information needed to efficiently complete the survey will be made widely available on the dedicated LAA Census webpage, thereby improving accessibility and ease of use. The Quick Start Guide in particular will provide easy-to-use instructions on the types of materials the survey respondent should have at his or her disposal prior to starting the survey, thereby reducing question fatigue or frustration with being unable to answer certain sections of the survey. The Quick Start Guide will be well-publicized on all materials and displayed prominently on the webpage to maximize participant familiarity with it and to encourage more people to utilize it as a tool. The more prepared each LAA is before starting the survey, the better the chances of completion.

The web-based survey instrument combined with the option of a downloadable, paper-based version will also expand accessibility by allowing for different survey-taking preferences and highly disparate time allocation in small organizations versus larger, more fully-staffed organizations. The survey software allows for targeted email reminders to be sent directly to non-respondents, which includes their unique survey link. In combination with the solicitation

letters and postcards, included in this packet, such reminders are shown to be effective in improving response rate. The solicitation letters themselves will provide an important avenue for maximizing response rate, as they will be sent directly to the primary contact at each LAA—therefore, they will be addressed to the person who is most likely to fill out the survey; also a person who might have an overflowing email inbox. The formality of the paper letters and postcards will increase the sense of professionalism surrounding the survey, and additionally, the physical reminder is more difficult to delete or ignore.

With the number of survey respondents expected, the NEA does not anticipate needing to correct for non-response bias.

4. Test Procedures or Methods

The NEA and Americans for the Arts conducted cognitive testing of the questionnaire on nine diverse LAAs. The NEA also employed a Task Force composed of experts in LAA services, survey methods, and data analysis (See Question B5) to assess the survey. These Task Force members were instrumental in the formulation of questions, the length of the survey, and the solicitation of LAAs to take the survey. They responded to all questions and response options based on how valuable they felt the information would be for the field as a whole and the participants in particular, the concept in which the NEA is most interested. The survey included in this Information Collection Request is based upon the NEA's own internal review, the Americans for the Arts internal review, and the Task Force recommendations.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects, Collecting, and/or Analyzing Data.

The Americans for the Arts Research team developed the Census questionnaire in a collaborative effort with their internal Local Arts Advancement staff, the National Endowment for the Arts' research and local arts agency staff experts, and the Local Arts Agency Census Task Force:

- NEA: Sunil Iyengar, Director, Office of Research and Analysis; Steve Shewfelt Deputy Director, Office of Research and Analysis; Michael Killoren, Director of Local Arts Agencies and Challenge America Fast-Track.
- Americans for the Arts: Randy Cohen, Vice President of Research & Policy, is the staff liaison at Americans for the Arts. The other staff members most directly working on the project are Ben Davidson, Senior Director of Research Services, and Hannah Jacobson, Research Coordinator, in the Research Department and Clay Lord, Vice President of Local Arts Advancement, and Theresa Cameron, Local Arts Advancement Program Manager, in Local Arts Advancement, all at Americans for the Arts.

The Task Force includes the following members, comprising representatives from the LAA field, research methodology experts, and academics.

- Teri Aldrich, Executive Director, Minot Area Council of the Arts
info@minotarts.org

- Torrie Allen, Chief Officer, Marketing and Development, Alaska Public Media
tallen@alaskapublic.org
- Jennifer Armstrong, Director, Community Arts Development Programs, Illinois Arts Council
J.Armstrong@illinois.gov
- Amanda Ashley, Assistant Professor, Community and Regional Planning, Boise State University
amandajohnson4@boisestate.edu
- Nick Crosson, Research Analyst at Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
NickC@philaculture.org
- Maryo Gard Ewell, Co-Manager of Creative Districts Program, Colorado Creative Industries
maryo@gard-sibley.org
- Roland Kushner, Asst. Professor, Department of Accounting, Economics & Business, Muhlenberg College
RKushner@muhlenberg.edu
- Bill Nix, VP (retired), Palm Beach County Cultural Council
nixcomgrp@aol.com
- Felix Padron, Executive Director, City of San Antonio's Department for Culture
felix.padron@sanantonio.gov
- Reuben Roqueni, Program Director, Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (formerly Tucson-Pima Arts Council)
reuben@nativeartsandcultures.org
- San San Wong, Barr Foundation in Boston (formerly San Francisco Arts Commission)
SanSan.Wong@barrfoundation.org

The Americans for the Arts Research Services team will conduct LAA Census data analysis.

The following is a list of the nine local arts agencies that participated in the testing phase of the survey.

Tester	LAA	City
Jonathan Glus CEO	Houston Arts Alliance	Houston, TX
Libby Maynard Executive Director	Ink People Center for the Arts	Eureka, CA

Jeff Prauer CEO	Metropolitan Regional Arts Council	St. Paul, MN
Coleen West Executive Director	Howard County Arts Council	Columbia, MD
John Bryan CEO	Arts Council of Richmond	Richmond, VA
Barbara Sexton Smith President and CEO	Fund for the Arts	Louisville, KY
Ronda Billerbeck Cultural Programs Manager	City of Kent Arts Commission	Kent, WA
Jody Leshinsky Assistant Director	Broward County Cultural Division	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
John D'Angelo Director	Division of Arts and Cultural Services	Wichita, KS