Our Town

Organizations may apply for creative placemaking projects that contribute to the livability of communities and place the arts at their core. Our Town offers support for projects in two areas:

- Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects that represent the distinct character and quality of their communities. These projects require a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government entity, with one of the partners being a cultural organization. Matching grants range from $25,000 to $200,000.
- Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking. These projects are available to arts and design service organizations, and industry, policy, or university organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work. Matching grants range from $25,000 to $100,000.

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to September 26, 2016
Earliest Announcement of Grant Award or Rejection	April 2017
Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance	August 1, 2017

OUR TOWN: Introduction

The Our Town grant program supports creative placemaking projects that help to transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work - placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies. This funding supports local efforts to enhance quality of life and opportunity for existing residents, increase creative activity, and create a distinct sense of place.

Through Our Town, subject to the availability of funding, the National Endowment for the Arts will provide a limited number of grants for creative placemaking. Our Town requires partnerships between arts organizations and government, other nonprofit organizations, and private entities to achieve livability goals for communities.

Our Town offers support for projects in two areas:

- **Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects**. These projects represent the distinct character and quality of their communities. These projects require a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government entity, with one of the partners being a cultural organization. Matching grants range from $25,000 to $200,000.
- **Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking.** These projects are available to arts and design service organizations, and industry, policy, or university organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work. Matching grants range from $25,000 to $100,000.

Through Our Town projects, the National Endowment for the Arts intends to achieve the following objective: *Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts.* See "Livability" for more details.

OUR TOWN: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects - Grant Program Description

Arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and be carried out by a nonprofit organization in partnership with a local government entity.

Projects

The National Endowment for the Arts plans to support a variety of projects across the country in urban and rural communities of all sizes. Please review the list of grants on our website to see the types of projects that have been funded recently through Our Town. Successful Our Town projects will impact livability by affecting community priorities such as public safety, health, blight and vacancy, environment, job creation, equity, local business development, civic participation, and/or community cohesion. The online storybook 'Exploring Our Town' has illustrative examples of Our Town grant projects and insights into doing creative placemaking for practitioners.

Projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and must reflect the following livability requirements:

- A vision for enhancing the social and/or economic livability of the community.
- The needs of existing residents and institutions in the community.
- Support for artists, design professionals, and arts organizations that integrate the arts and design into the fabric of civic life and/or community plans.
- Creative approaches to addressing community challenges or priorities.

Projects may include arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects such as:

Arts Engagement
Arts engagement projects support artistically excellent artistic production or practice as the focus of creative placemaking work. This includes artist-led projects that impact livability.

- Innovative programming that fosters interaction among community members, arts organizations, and artists, or activates existing cultural and community assets.
- Public art that improves public spaces and strategically reflects or shapes the physical and social character of a community.
- Artist residencies that provide artists with the opportunity to bring their creative skill sets to non-arts institutions, including residencies in government offices, businesses, or other institutions.
- Projects that provide artists professional development and access to markets and capital for business development in communities, including support for creative entrepreneurship.
- Festivals and performances that activate spaces not normally used for such purposes.

Cultural Planning
Cultural planning projects support the development of artistically excellent local support systems necessary for creative placemaking to succeed.

- Creative asset mapping.
- Cultural district planning.
- The development of master plans or community-wide strategies for public art.
- Community workshops and plans for the integration of arts and cultural activities that address local challenges and priorities, including artist involvement and leadership in the processes that empower local residents.

Design
Design projects that demonstrate artistic excellence while supporting the development of places where creative activities occur, or where the identity of place is created or reinforced.

- Design of public spaces, e.g., parks, plazas, landscapes, neighborhoods, districts, infrastructure, bridges, and artist-produced elements of streetscapes.
- Community engagement activities including design charrettes, design competitions, and community design workshops.
- Design of rehearsal, studio, or live/work spaces for artists, including innovative new models of artist space like co-working and shared spaces.
- Design of cultural facilities – new or adaptive reuse.

We understand that creative placemaking projects are often multi-year, large-scale initiatives. Please specify in your application which phase or phases of your project are included in your request for funding. All phases of a project−except for those for facilities noted below−are eligible for support.

Where appropriate, Our Town applications should demonstrate how the project will align with other place-based federal grant programs and policies, including, but not limited to, those from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), such as Consolidated Plans, Analysis of impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Long Range Transportation Plans, and Asset Management Plans.

National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act Review

If you are recommended for a grant and your project has the potential to effect environmental or historic resources, your project may **be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act** **(NEPA) and/or the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and** the National Endowment for the Arts will conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance NEPA/NHPA**.**

Examples of such projects include:

- An arts festival in a park.
- The commissioning and installation of an outdoor sculpture or mural, temporary or permanent.

- Design of restoration or rehabilitation of a historic structure.
- Design of a new structure in a historic district or adjacent a historic building.
- A project involving or occurring near a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object that is 50 years old or included/eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

If your project requires review for compliance with the NEPA/NHPA, you will be notified by the National Endowment for the Arts and need to answer additional questions about your project activities. We will conduct a review of your project activities in accordance with NEPA/NHPA. **This review may likely take up to several months and may delay your project's start date, our ability to make a grant award/our ability to release grant funds.**

To learn more about what **questions you will need to answer** for the review of a project **impacted by the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) and/or the [National Historic Preservation Act](#), see [here](#).**

Below is what applicant see if they click the link:

National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act Review

If you are recommended for a grant and your project has the potential to effect environmental or historic resources, your project may **be subject to the [National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)](#) and/or the [National Historic Preservation Act](#) (NHPA) and** the National Endowment for the Arts will conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance with NEPA/NHPA**.**

Below are the questions you will need to answer for the National Endowment for the Arts to conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance with NEPA/NHPA.

1. Provide a short assessment of whether your project has the potential to have an effect on environmental or historic resources and whether that effect is an *adverse* effect. We will review the documentation and make our own finding. Please note, if your project will never physically alter a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object, or you're not working on a plan or design for a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object, please state this as your reason why your project does not have the potential to have an adverse effect on environmental or historic resources. For example, if you are producing a poetry festival in an existing space and will not use the space for anything but temporary programming, your project may not have the potential to have an adverse effect on environmental or historic resources under NEPA/NHPA.
2. For the purposes of questions (a)-(i) below, a "National Historic Register Site" or an "NRHP Site" means project activities on any district, site, building, structure, landscape or object that is included or eligible for inclusion on the National Register, both individually or as a contributing element. Generally, NRHP Sites will include (1) any

building/site 50 years old or older, (2) any building/site *included or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP*, or (3) located in a historic district.

Additionally, for the purposes of the questions (a)-(i) below, please note that for a project to be "temporary" it must be 100% reversible.

Does your project involve any of the following activities? If so, please explain with as much specificity as possible.

   a. Does your project involve in-kind replacements or repairs?
   b. Does your project involve a festival/public event of limited size or duration? If so, will there be any permanent effects on a NRHP Site(s) or to any structures/installations erected or installed (temporary or permanent) NRHP Site(s)?
   c. Does your project involve outdoor murals or other art on a NRHP Site(s) or adjacent to a NRHP Site(s)?
   d. Does your project involve temporary public art on a building 50 years or older (e.g., sculpture, statuary, banners, mixed media, painting)? If so, does the project necessitate the installation of hardware on a NRHP Site(s)?
   e. Does your project involve erecting or placing permanent wayfinding signs (e.g., artistic directional signs) adjacent to or on a NRHP Site(s)?
   f. Does your project involve installing small structures (e.g., benches, bus shelters, produce stands) attached to or dependent on a building a NRHP Site(s)? If so, please describe the ground disturbance necessary for such an installation.
   g. Does your project involve landscape maintenance or rehabilitation (e.g., community garden, urban park) on a NRHP Site(s)? If so, where? Will it include the addition of or new large-scale landscape elements?
   h. Does your project involve conceptual planning/design/research (e.g., feasibility and planning studies, early design development work/conceptual drawings and renderings, asset mapping, design charrettes)?
   i. Does your project involve information gathering/data analysis/ information dissemination (e.g., historic and cultural demonstrations, public affairs actions, studies, reports, document mailings, data analysis)?
3. If you are proposing a public art project, temporary or permanent, or you are designing or planning a district, building, site, landscape, structure or object, you must provide us with the following detailed information:
   o Provide a very clear description of the district, building, site, landscape, structure, or object in which you will be working, even if it is just planning or design activities. Include the address(es).
   o If any element of the district, building, site, landscape, structure or object (or adjacent properties) is 50 years old or older, describe that element in detail. For example, if you are working on a historic building or district (or there is one adjacent), describe the age (give year built if available), whether or not it's included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and the type of activities being planned or designed for your project.

- o Provide a detailed description of any project activities that might now or someday have an effect on the environment so that we may review the actions under the NEPA. Be very specific. For example, if you will be doing cleanup of a site, describe exactly what needs to be cleaned. Is it litter on the site or toxic waste that needs to be cleaned up? If you will be installing public art, describe the previous use of the property and why you think the land is not likely to be contaminated.
- o If you have any correspondence from your State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or other authorities who monitor historic assets, please attach the correspondence.
- o If you have conducted a review according to your state's environmental quality laws or soil testing on your own, please attach an executive summary of that review. Do not submit a report.
- o If local authorities have issued any permits for your project, describe them.
- o If you don't have documentation, but you have talked to state or local authorities regarding historic or environmental concerns, describe your efforts, including when they took place.

4. If an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization may attach religious and/or cultural significance to historic properties touched by your project, please describe. We may contact you for additional documentation.
   - o Make this assessment regardless of the location of the property, as the circumstances of history may have resulted in an Indian tribe now being located a great distance from its ancestral homelands and places of importance.
   - o If a property is owned by a tribe or Native Hawaiian organization, let us know.
   - o Identify the names of the tribe(s) or Native Hawaiian organization(s) you refer to, if any.

We may contact you for additional documentation.

Required Partnerships

A key to the success of creative placemaking is involving the arts in partnership with committed governmental, nonprofit, and private sector leadership. All applications must demonstrate a partnership that will provide leadership for the project. These partnerships must involve two primary partners, as defined by these guidelines:

1) Nonprofit organization

2) Local government entity

One of these two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. The highest ranking official of the local government is required to submit a formal statement of support designating the project as the one of the up to two applications being submitted for the local government. See "How to Prepare and Submit an Application" for more information.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as arts organizations and artists, design professionals and design centers, state level government agencies, foundations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, community organizations, council of governments, rural planning organizations, transportation agencies, special districts, educational organizations, as well as public and governmental entities.

You may find it helpful to contact your local or regional arts agency as you begin the process within your community.

Livability

Through Our Town projects, the Arts Endowment intends to achieve the following objective from our strategic plan: *Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts*.

Successful Our Town projects will impact livability by affecting community priorities such as public safety, health, blight and vacancy, environment, job creation, equity, local business development, civic participation, and/or community cohesion. The anticipated long-term results for Livability projects are measurable community benefits, which might include:

- Growth in overall levels of social and civic engagement.
- New avenues for expression and creativity.
- Design-focused changes in policies, laws, and/or regulations.
- Job and/or revenue growth.
- Positive changes in migration patterns.

For resources on measuring and tracking livability impacts, see here:
https://www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/project-process/measuring-project-results

OUR TOWN: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects - Award Information

Grant Amounts and Matching Funds

We anticipate awarding a limited number of grants, subject to the availability of funding.

You must request a grant amount at one of the following levels: $25,000, $50,000, $75,000, $100,000, $150,000, or $200,000. We will award very few grants at the $200,000 level; these will be only for projects of significant scale and impact.

All grants require a nonfederal match of at least 1 to 1. These matching funds may be all cash or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. You may include in your Project Budget matching funds that are proposed but not yet committed at the time of the application deadline.

We reserve the right to limit our support of a project to a particular phase(s) or cost(s). All costs included in your Project Budget must be expended during your period of performance. Costs associated with other federal funds, whether direct or indirect (e.g., flow down through a state arts agency), can't be included in your Project Budget. **Costs incurred before the earliest project start date of August 1, 2017, can't be included in your budget or match**.

Period of Performance

Our support of a project may start on August 1, 2017, or any time thereafter. A grant period of up to two years is allowed. Allow sufficient time to plan, execute, and close out your project. **The two-year period is intended to allow an applicant sufficient time to plan, execute, and close out its project, not to repeat a one-year project for a second year**.

Any planning costs that are included as part of the project must be incurred during your established period of performance.

OUR TOWN: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects - Applicant Eligibility

All applications require partnerships that involve at least two primary partners as defined by these guidelines: a nonprofit organization and a local governmental entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additional partners are encouraged.

One of the two primary partners must act as the official applicant (lead applicant). This lead applicant must meet the eligibility requirements, submit the application, and assume full responsibility for the grant.

Eligible lead applicants are:

- Nonprofit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) U.S. organizations with a documented **three-year history of programming**.
- Local governments. **For the purposes of these guidelines**, **local governments are defined as** counties, parishes, cities, towns, villages, or federally recognized tribal governments. Local arts agencies or other departments, agencies, or entities within an eligible local government may submit the application on behalf of that local government. The following do not qualify as local governments: state level government agencies, other state-designated entities, state higher education institutions, regional governments

and entities, quasi-government organizations, regional planning organizations, and business improvement districts.

For U.S. territories, if no local government exists, the territory government can serve as the local government.

To be eligible, the lead applicant organization must:

- Meet the National Endowment for the Arts "[Legal Requirements](#)," including nonprofit, tax-exempt status, at the time of application.
- Have submitted acceptable Final Report packages by the due date(s) for all National Endowment for the Arts award(s) previously received.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as arts organizations and artists, design professionals and design centers, state level government agencies, foundations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, community organizations, council of governments, rural planning organizations, transportation agencies, special districts, educational organizations, as well as public and governmental entities. **Federal agencies cannot be monetary partners**.

The designated state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and their regional arts organizations (RAOs) may serve as partners, but not primary partners, in projects. National Endowment for the Arts funds can't support any SAA or RAO costs. There is an exception for U.S. territories. The territory's SAA may serve as the local government primary partner. However, all grant funds must be passed on to the other partners.

All applicants must have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and be registered with the System for Award Management **(**SAM, www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. **Finalize a new or renew an existing registration at least two weeks before the application deadline**. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline.

Application Restrictions

An organization may submit as a lead applicant two applications to Our Town.

A partnering organization may serve as a partner on as many applications as they like.

If two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, local government, or within the same geographic area, the capacity of the lead applicant, local government, or geographic area to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

All applications must include a formal statement of support for the project from the highest ranking official of the local government participating in the project. Each local government -- whether applying as the lead applicant or as the primary partner with a nonprofit organization -- is limited to two applications. The local government must coordinate internally to ensure that only two applications are submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts, rather than multiple applications through its various offices. The submitted applications must be identified as proposing the chosen projects by formal statements of support from the highest ranking official of the local government. If more than two applications are submitted for a government, we will ask the highest ranking official to select two applications to move forward.

Other National Endowment for the Arts Funding Opportunities

You may apply to other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities, including Art Works and Challenge America, in addition to Our Town. In each case, the request must be for a **distinctly different project, or a distinctly different phase of a project.** If you have applied to the NEA in the past and were not recommended for funding, you may apply again to any funding opportunity, including Our Town.

OUR TOWN: Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking - Grant Program Description

This area of Our Town funding is to build and disseminate creative placemaking knowledge more broadly.

These projects can be carried out by arts service or design service organizations, and/or other national or regional membership, policy, or university-based organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work, to expand the knowledge base about creative placemaking to their members and the field.

These projects should expand the capacity of artists and arts organizations to be more effective at executing creative placemaking projects, and to work more effectively with economic and community development practitioners, and vice versa, to improve the livability of the communities and create opportunities for all.

In the first two years of funding this area of Our Town, we have invested in several partnership projects that demonstrate creative placemaking strategies to those working in communities. These have included audiences such as artists and arts organizations, urban planners, rural economic planners, public park managers, local civic leaders, community development practitioners, and downtown managers. We encourage you to look at the past grants listed here (LINK TO GRANTS).

We hope to reach as many fields related to the role of arts in community development as possible. In this third year of the program, we are interested in expanding the types of audiences targeted in projects. This may include, but is not limited to, additional types of cultural organizations and artists, public safety officials, Native American community development leaders, public health practitioners, transportation leaders, environmental/resilience practitioners, etc. We are especially interested in projects where the dissemination of creative placemaking strategies and tools ultimately empowers local residents.

Projects

These projects should expand the knowledge base about creative placemaking to their members and the field, and must reflect the following:

- Involvement of the organization's membership, audience, or constituency, as appropriate.
- Systemic approach to building knowledge about creative placemaking for the organization and broader field of community development.
- Clearly defined systems that provide for the management of new ideas, documentation, the potential for learning, and sharing of technical assistance programming.
- Clearly defined audience for technical assistance, and delivery of technical assistance. (Funding will not support only the creation of technical assistance knowledge. The knowledge must also be delivered).

- The appropriate arts and/or place-based experts to provide the services included in the project. For example, an art-based membership organization must have a place-based knowledge consultant/organization/partner identified at the time of application, or a place-based membership organization must have an arts-based knowledge consultant/organization/partner.
- Artistic excellence of the arts organizations, or artists involved with the project.

Projects may include activities in creative placemaking for member organizations and individuals such as:

- Community workshops for the integration of arts and cultural activities that address local challenges and priorities, including artist involvement and leadership in the processes that empower local residents.
- Mentorships.
- Training opportunities and convenings, whether in-person or remote.
- Technical assistance and capacity building for members.
- Research, policy analysis, and decision support tools that help to build a creative placemaking knowledge base.
- Other projects appropriate to the organization's internal system of learning.

Projects may focus on delivering technical assistance on a wide variety of creative placemaking topics such as those project types covered in 'Exploring Our Town' (LINK), or under the Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design area of Our Town (LINK).

We understand that creative placemaking projects are often multi-year, large-scale initiatives. Please specify in your application which phase or phases of your project are included in your request for funding. All phases of a project are eligible for support.

Required Partnerships

Applications must identify a partnership with either an organization or consultant, and one of the two partners must have creative placemaking expertise.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as colleges and universities, or individuals.

Arts service and design service organizations and other national or regional organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work are expected to involve their memberships and constituencies, as appropriate.

Livability

Through Our Town projects, the Arts Endowment intends to achieve the following objective from our strategic plan: *Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts*.

Successful Our Town projects will impact livability by affecting community priorities such as public safety, health, blight and vacancy, environment, job creation, equity, local business

development, civic participation, and/or community cohesion. The anticipated long-term results for Livability projects are measurable community benefits, which might include:

- Growth in overall levels of social and civic engagement.
- New avenues for expression and creativity.
- Design-focused changes in policies, laws, and/or regulations.
- Job and/or revenue growth.
- Positive changes in migration patterns.

For resources on measuring and tracking livability impacts, see here: https://www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/project-process/measuring-project-results

OUR TOWN: Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking - Award Information

Grant Amounts and Matching Funds

We anticipate awarding a limited number of grants, subject to the availability of funding.

You must request a grant amount at one of the following levels: $25,000, $50,000, $75,000, or $100,000.

All grants require a nonfederal match of at least 1 to 1. These matching funds may be all cash or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions. You may include in your Project Budget matching funds that are proposed but not yet committed at the time of the application deadline.

We reserve the right to limit our support of a project to a particular phase(s) or cost(s). All costs included in your Project Budget must be expended during your period of performance. Costs associated with other federal funds, whether direct or indirect (e.g., flow down through a state arts agency), can't be included in your Project Budget. **Costs incurred before the earliest project start date of August 1, 2017, can't be included in your budget or match.**

Period of Performance

Our support of a project may start on August 1, 2017, or any time thereafter. A grant period of up to two years is allowed. Allow sufficient time to plan, execute, and close out your project. **The two-year period is intended to allow an applicant sufficient time to plan, execute, and close out its project, not to repeat a one-year project for a second year**.

Any planning costs that are included as part of the project must be incurred during your established period of performance.

OUR TOWN: Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking - Applicant Eligibility

Organizations that may apply include:

- Arts and design organizations that provide services to the field.
- National and regional place-based industry, policy or university-based organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work. This may include housing, transit, community development, environmental, and economic development organizations who wish to engage in creative placemaking activities.

Applications must identify a partnership with either an organization or consultant with creative placemaking expertise. Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as colleges and universities, or individuals.

To be eligible, the applicant organization **must**:

- Meet the National Endowment for the Arts "**Legal Requirements**" including nonprofit, tax-exempt status at the time of application.
- Have a three-year history of programming prior to the application deadline.
- Have submitted acceptable Final Report packages by the due date(s) for all National Endowment for the Arts awards(s) previously received.

The designated state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and their regional arts organizations (RAOs) may serve as partners in Our Town projects. National Endowment for the Arts funds can't support any SAA or RAO costs.

All applicants must have a DUNS number (www.dnb.com) and be registered with **the System for Award Management (**SAM, www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. **Finalize a new or renew an existing registration at least two weeks before the application deadline**. This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew at least two weeks before the deadline.

Application Restrictions

An organization may submit as a lead applicant two applications to Our Town.

A partnering organization may serve as a partner on as many applications as they like.

If two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, the capacity of the lead applicant to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

Other National Endowment for the Arts Funding Opportunities

You may apply to other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities, including Art Works and Challenge America, in addition to Our Town. In each case, the request must be for a **distinctly different project, or a distinctly different phase of a project.** If you have applied to the National Endowment for the Arts in the past and were not recommended for funding, you may apply again to any funding opportunity, including Our Town.

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FAQs (for Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects)

To Apply: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

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Award Administration

How to Prepare and Submit an Application

Step 1: Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov

Step 2: Submit Materials to NEA-GO

To Apply: Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking

Grant Program Description

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OUR TOWN: Application Calendar

Application Deadline	Earliest Announcement of Grant Award or Rejection	Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of performance
September 12, 2016	April 2017	August 1, 2017

You are required to use Grants.gov. See "How to Prepare and Submit an Application" for further information.

> Before you apply through **Grants.gov** for the first time, you must be registered. Registration with Grants.gov:
>
> - Is a multi-step process.
> - Takes time; allow two weeks**.**
> - Must be completed before you can submit your application.

Late, ineligible, and incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

In the event of a major emergency (e.g., a hurricane or Grants.gov technological failure), the National Endowment for the Arts Chairman may adjust application deadlines for affected applicants. If a deadline is extended for any reason, an announcement will be posted on our website.

If you have questions:

E-mail: OT@arts.gov

202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y. (Text-Telephone, a device for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.)

Individuals who do not use conventional print should contact the National Endowment for the Arts Accessibility Office at 202/682-5532 for help in acquiring an audio recording of these guidelines.

OUR TOWN: We Do Not Fund

Under these guidelines, funding is **not** available for:

- Costs incurred before or after the beginning of the official period of performance.
- General operating or seasonal support.
- Costs for the creation of new organizations.
- Direct grants to individuals. (We encourage applicant organizations to involve individual artists in all possible ways.)
- Individual elementary or secondary schools -- charter, private, or public -- directly. Schools may participate as partners in projects for which another eligible organization applies. Local education agencies, school districts, and state and regional education agencies are eligible. If a single school also is a local education agency, as is the case with some charter schools, the school may apply with documentation that supports its status as a local education agency.
- Construction, purchase, or renovation of facilities. (Design fees, preparing space for an exhibit, installation or de-installation of art, and community planning are eligible. However, no National Endowment for the Arts or matching funds may be directed to the costs of physical construction or renovation or toward the purchase costs of facilities or land.)
- Commercial (for-profit) enterprises or activities, including concessions, food, T-shirts, or other items for resale.
- Cash reserves and endowments.
- Subgranting or regranting, except for state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, or local arts agencies that are designated to operate on behalf of their local governments or are operating units of city or county government. ([See more information on subgranting](.).)
- Costs to bring a project into compliance with federal grant requirements. This includes environmental or historical assessments or reviews and the hiring of individuals to write assessments or reviews or to otherwise comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act.
- Awards to individuals or organizations to honor or recognize achievement.
- Generally, professional training programs or courses in degree-granting institutions.
- Projects that replace arts instruction provided by an arts specialist.
- Literary publishing that does not focus on contemporary literature and/or writers.
- Generally, publication of books or exhibition of works by the applicant organization's staff, board members, faculty, or trustees.
- Exhibitions of, and other projects that primarily involve, single, individually-owned, private collections.
- Projects for which the selection of artists or art works is based upon criteria other than artistic excellence and merit. Examples include festivals, exhibitions, or publications for which no jury/editorial judgment has been applied.
- Expenditures related to compensation to foreign nationals and/or travel to or from foreign countries when those expenditures are not in compliance with regulations issued by the U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Assets Control. For further information, see http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/ or contact our Grants & Contracts Office at grants@arts.gov.

- Project costs supported by any other federal funding. This includes federal funding received either directly from a federal agency (e.g., NEH, HUD, National Science Foundation, or an entity that receives federal appropriations such as the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or Amtrak); or indirectly from a pass-through organization such as a state arts agency, regional arts organization, or a grant made to another entity.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Gifts and prizes, including cash prizes as well as other items (e.g., iPads, gift certificates) with monetary value.
- General miscellaneous or contingency costs.
- Contributions and donations to other entities.
- Fines and penalties, bad debt costs, deficit reduction.
- Social activities such as receptions, parties, galas.
- Lobbying.
- Marketing expenses that are not directly related to the project.
- Audit costs that are not directly related to a single audit (formerly known as an A-133 audit).
- Rental costs for home office workspace owned by individuals or entities affiliated with the applicant organization.
- Visa costs paid to the U.S. government.

OUR TOWN: How to Prepare and Submit an Application -Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

These instructions provide all of the information that you need to submit an application. Submitting an application is a multi-step process. You will interact with the NEA's website, Grants.gov, and the NEA GrantsOnline™ System (NEA-GO). We urge you to read these instructions in their entirety before you begin the application process.

Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on September 26, 2016

1. View the Our Town Guidelines Webinars:
   - We will conduct a live "How to Apply" webinar on July 20, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time followed by a Q&A session. Click here to register for the upcoming webinar and for an archive of the webinar after it is concluded.
   - We will conduct a live "Tips & Tricks for Success" webinar on July 27, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time followed by a Q&A session. Click here to register for the upcoming webinar and for an archive of the webinar after it is concluded.
2. Step 1 – Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov:
   - The SF-424 (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance)
3. View the NEA Grant Application Form (GAF) Tutorial:
   - Online Tutorial: Using the NEA Grant Application Form
4. Step 2 – Submit Materials to NEA-GO:
   - Fill out and submit the NEA Grant Application Form and upload items to NEA-GO.
5. Application updates after submission: DOES OT DO THIS?

   Send new information that significantly affects your application (such as changes in artists or confirmed funding commitments) as soon as possible to the staff. Remember to include your organization's name and NEA application number.

If you have questions about your application, please contact the staff at OT@arts.gov.

OUR TOWN: Step 1 - Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov for Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

Complete and submit the SF-424 (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form) to Grants.gov.

Register or renew/verify Grants.gov and SAM.gov registration | Download the SF-424 | Fill-out the SF-424 | Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov | Track Your Application

Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on September 26, 2016

1. Register or renew/verify Grants.gov and SAM.gov registration:

- Before submitting the SF-424, your organization must register or renew/verify its current registration with both **Grants.gov** and the **System for Award Management (SAM)**. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your SF-424.
- Go to Grants.gov's **Organization Registration** to create a new organization registration.
- **Grants.gov Contact Center**: Call 1-800-518-4726, e-mail support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at **Support**. The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **SAM Federal Service Desk**: Call 1-866-606-8220 or see the information posted on the SAM website at **SAM User Help**.
- You do not need to complete the registration process to download the SF-424 and begin to prepare your material (see below). However, you will need the Grants.gov Username and Password that you obtain during the registration process to submit your SF-424.
- Exceptions to the deadline will be considered only for those issues related to registration or renewal. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew by at least August 22 with the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), System for Award Management (SAM), or Grants.gov.
- In addition to these instructions, you should periodically check the Grants.gov blog or the Grants.gov homepage for tips, updates, and alerts.

2. Download the SF-424:

- First, verify your software. You must have a version of Adobe Reader that is supported by Grants.gov installed on your computer before you download the application package containing the SF-424 from Grants.gov. Please go to "Download Software" to see the compatible versions of Adobe Reader or to download and install Adobe Reader.
- Access the SF-424 on Grants.gov by clicking on the link for your deadline:

DOWNLOAD

[Funding Opportunity Number 2016NEA01OT]

This will bring you to the "Selected Grant Applications for Download" screen. Next, download the Grants.gov "Grant Application Package." Enter the name of your organization in the "Application Filing Name" yellow field. Click on the "Save" button and **save the application package to a location on your computer or network where you can find it readily**. Please note that Grants.gov uses the term "application" and "application package" when all you'll submit is the SF-424 form (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance). Please note that you will submit the substantial part of your application during Step 2.

Do not open a Grants.gov "Workspace" environment to create, prepare, or submit your application materials.

3. Fill out the SF-424:

NOTE: All asterisked (*) items and yellow fields on this form are required and must be completed before you will be able to submit the form. Do not type in all capital letters when completing the form. Enter information directly into the form. Do not copy from an old SF-424 or another document and paste into the form.

1. Name of Federal Agency: Pre-populated.

2. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: Pre-populated.

3. Date Received: This will be filled automatically with the date that you submit your SF-424; leave blank.

4. Funding Opportunity Number: Pre-populated.

5. Applicant Information:

a. Legal Name: The name provided here must be the applicant's legal name as it appears in the current IRS 501(c)(3) status letter or in the official document that identifies the organization as a unit of state or local government, or as a federally recognized tribal community or tribe. (Do not use your organization's popular name, if different.)

If you are a parent organization that is applying on behalf of an eligible independent component, do not list the name of the independent component here. You will be asked for that information later.

b. Address:

Use Street 1 for your street address or post office box number, whichever is used for your U.S. Postal Service mailing address. Street 2 is not a required field and should be used **only** when a Suite or Room Number or other similar information is a necessary part of your address. Do **not** use Street 2 to give a second address for your organization.

In the Zip/Postal Code box, organizations in the United States should enter the **full 9-digit zip code** that was assigned by the U.S. Postal Service. If you do not know your full zip code, you may look it up at **www.usps.com/zip4/**

d. Type of Applicant: Select the item that best characterizes your organization from the menu in the first drop down box. Additional choices are optional.

e. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): Enter the 9-digit number that was assigned by the Internal Revenue Service; do not use a Social Security Number.

f. Organizational DUNS: All organizational applicants for federal funds must have a DUNS number, which is recognized as the universal standard for identifying organizations worldwide. **The number that you enter here must agree with the number (either 9 or 13 digits) that you used with the SAM (System for Award Management) as part of the Grants.gov registration. Otherwise, your SF-424 will not be validated by Grants.gov and will be rejected.**

g. Congressional District: Enter the number of the Congressional District where the applicant organization is located. Use the following format: 2 character State Abbreviation-3 character District Number. For example, if your organization is located in the 5th Congressional District of California, enter "CA-005." If your state has a single At-Large Representative or your territory has a single Delegate, enter your 2 character state/territory abbreviation and "-000." If you need help determining your district, go to **www.house.gov** and use the "Find Your Representative" tool.

6. **Project Information**:

a. Project Title: Provide a brief descriptive title for your proposed project. For example: Artist Communities: To support An Exhibition of the Works of Georgia O'Keeffe.

b. Project Description: In two or three **brief** sentences, clearly describe your specific project, not your organization. Begin the first sentence with "To support" and include the name of the project. Follow this with up to two more sentences that describe the type of project, the target population that will be served, and where the project will take place during the requested period of performance. For examples, see **Recent Grants**.

Please note:

This field on the form has a character limit of 1,000, including spaces. Even if you have less than 1,000 characters, Grants.gov may translate special characters (e.g., apostrophes) in a way that will cause your SF-424 to be rejected. This can happen if you "cut and paste" from an old SF-424 or another document into the form. We strongly encourage you to write a succinct project description and double check the number of characters.

c. Proposed Project Start Date/End Date: Enter the beginning and ending dates for your requested period of performance, i.e., the span of time necessary to plan, execute, and close out your proposed project. The start date should be the first day of the month, and the end date should be the last day of the month. Our support of a project may start on or after **August 1, 2017**. Generally, a period of performance of up to two years is allowed. Your budget should include only the activities and costs incurred during the requested period of performance.

7. Project Director:

Provide the requested information for the Project Director. Select a Prefix (e.g., Ms., Mr.) even though this is not a required field.

Provide contact information, including an e-mail address, that will be valid through the announcement date for your category.

8. Primary Contact/Grant Administrator:

Provide the requested information for the individual who should be contacted on all matters involving this application and the administration of any grant that may be awarded. For colleges and universities, this person is often a Sponsored Research, Sponsored Programs, or Contracts and Grants Officer. Select a Prefix even though this is not a required field. For the Telephone number field, use the following format: 000-000-0000.

In some organizations, particularly smaller ones, this individual may be the same as the Project Director. If this is the case, you may check the "Same as Project Director" box and not repeat information that you have already provided in Item 7. (If the Primary Contact/Grant Administrator is the same as the Authorizing Official, please complete all items under both 8 and 9 even though there will be some repetition.)

9. Authorized Representative:

Enter the requested information for the AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) who is authorized to submit this application to Grants.gov. Select a Prefix even though this is not a required field. The AOR must have the legal authority to obligate your organization (e. g., be a senior member of the staff such as an ED, Director of Development, etc.). See specific requirements for who can serve as an AOR for colleges and universities. Contractors or administrative support staff cannot serve as an AOR. By clicking the "I Agree" box at the top of Item 9, this individual will be certifying compliance with relevant federal requirements on your

organization's behalf. (These requirements can be found in the "**Assurance of Compliance**" section of these guidelines.) The "Signature of Authorized Representative" and "Date Signed" boxes will be populated by Grants.gov upon submission of the SF-424.

4. Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov:

- To begin the submission process, click the "**Save & Submit**" button. [This button will not become active (and turn from light to dark gray) until you have saved your SF-424 with all required fields completed. Clicking this button will prompt you to save your application package one last time. When asked if you want to replace the existing file, click "Yes." You will then be reconnected to Grants.gov and the Internet.] **You will be prompted to provide your Grants.gov Username and Password that you obtained during registration**.
- Click the "**Login**" button. This will bring you to the "Application Submission Verification and Signature" screen, which provides a summary of the Funding Opportunity for which you are applying. Click the "Sign and Submit Application" button to complete the process. **Be certain that you are satisfied with your SF-424 before you click this button. No revisions to your SF-424 are possible through Grants.gov once it is submitted**.
- Submit your SF-424 no later than September 2 to give yourself ample time to resolve any problems you might encounter. You take a significant risk by waiting until the day of the deadline to submit.
- We will not accept late SF-424s or late SF-424s that are the result of user error, including failure to verify that your SF-424 was validated and accepted by the Grants.gov system through **Track My Application**. Exceptions may be made if you can provide documentation dating from September 2 that, in the judgment of the National Endowment for the Arts, indicates a technological failure on the part of Grants.gov. We will consider and address your situation as appropriate.
- Failure to successfully submit the SF-424 form through Grants.gov will make you ineligible to complete Step 2 of the application process.

5. Track Your Application:

- Verify that your SF-424 was validated and accepted by the Grants.gov system. Go to **Track My Application** to confirm the validation and track the progress of your SF-424 submission through Grants.gov. Do not wait until the day of the deadline to verify your submission in case you encounter any difficulties.

6. Prepare to Complete Step 2:

- Read the **Step 2 instructions** to learn about how and when to access the NEA-GO system to fill out and submit the NEA Grant Application Form and upload items to NEA-GO.

Additional Help

For additional help on how to use Grants.gov, please see the Grants.gov website at **Support**.
You also can send e-mail to the Grants.gov Contact Center at **support@grants.gov** or call them
at 1-800-518-4726, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

OUR TOWN: Step 2 - Submit Through NEA-GO for Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

Fill out and submit the NEA Grant Application Form and upload items to NEA-GO.

You will use the NEA GrantsOnline™ System (NEA-GO) to complete Step 2 of the application process. You must first have successfully completed Step 1 (submitting the SF-424 to Grants.gov) by the application deadline of record.

Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016 by 11:59 pm Eastern Time
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to 11:59 pm Eastern Time on September 26, 2016

Do not attempt to complete Step 2 before NEA-GO becomes available to you on these dates. Your log on credentials will be created for you. Do not log in to the system early and create your own NEA-GO registration. If you do, it will prevent you from accessing the system.

1. Accessing NEA-GO:

• **Log on to NEA-GO at: http://nea.cloud.culturegrants.org/index/login**
• **User Name = Grants.gov Tracking Number** **(Example: "GRANT12345678")**
• **Password = Agency Tracking Number/NEA Application Number** **(Example: "17-123456")**
• **Once you are logged on to NEA-GO, select the "Link to Formset" icon on the My Forms page to access the Grant Application Form**

How do I find my Grants.gov tracking number? Your Grants.gov tracking number is assigned to you by Grants.gov at the time you submit your SF-424. A confirmation screen will appear once your SF-424 submission is complete. Your Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of this screen. Remember to save this number.

How do I find my Agency Tracking #/NEA Application Number? The NEA assigns the number to your application 1-2 business days after you submit your SF-424, but no earlier than

September 2. The number is not available before this date. Log on to Grants.gov with the Grants.gov Username and Password that you used to submit your SF-424. Select the *Check My Application* feature to find your Agency Tracking#/NEA Application Number. NOTE: *Check My Application* is a separate feature from Track My Application at Grants.gov.

For specific help on how to complete your application, please review the instructions in these guidelines or **contact the staff at OT@arts.gov**.

2. Fill out the Grant Application Form

You will submit a substantial part of your application through the Grant Application Form (GAF) in NEA-GO, including:

- Answers to narrative questions about your organization and project.
- Financial information about your organization and project.
- Bios of key individuals.
- Upload work samples and statements of support.

Click below to see the application questions, instructions, and information about required application materials that you will submit through the Grant Application Form in NEA-GO.

Our Town FY17 Step 2 Application Instructions:

DOWNLOAD INSTRUCTIONS

You should prepare your responses and material well in advance of the deadline and have them fully ready to upload once NEA-GO opens for you. You will not have access to the Grant Application Form until NEA-GO opens for you to submit your application materials on the dates noted above.

Note: We strongly urge you to complete and submit the Grant Application Form and upload materials outside of NEA-GO's hours of heaviest usage, generally 8:00 pm to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline.

HELPFUL TIPS:

1. Submit your materials to NEA-GO prior to the deadline to give yourself ample time to resolve any problems that you might encounter. You take a significant risk by waiting until the day of the deadline to submit.
   - Most problems can be solved by changing your browser. If that doesn't work, change devices.
   - NEA staff will not be available to help you after 5:30 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline.

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2. Don't forget to hit the "Submit" button when you are ready to submit your application. If you do not hit the "Submit" button, your application will not be received.
3. NEA-GO closes at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline. Be sure you have finished uploading your materials and hit the "Submit" button prior to that time.
4. You will receive confirmation of your successful submission in two ways: 1) a pop up on your screen, and 2) an email from noreply at culturegrants.org. Maintain documentation of your successful submission. If you modify your application after you submit, you will not receive additional confirmations.

   You also can confirm that your application was received when you log in to NEA-GO. On the first screen it will say "Received" if your application has been received. If your application has not yet been received, it will say "In Progress."

5. After submitting your application, you may log back into NEA-GO and make modifications to your submission up until the system closes on the day of the deadline. Remember to hit the "Save" and "Submit" button again prior the deadline.
6. You may print a copy of your application at any time, whether in draft or final form, for your records. The print icon is located on the My Forms page.
7. Some special characters (such as ampersands, quotation marks, apostrophes, and angle brackets) take up more character counts than others in webforms, including the Grant Application Form. This is because certain characters are translated into HTML code which takes up more than one character space. If you notice a higher than expected character count when you enter information directly into the Grant Application Form or copy and paste from your word processing program, here are a few tips:
   o Transfer your text into a text-only utility like Notepad before pasting it into the Grant Application Form. This will delete hidden HTML code to ensure the proper capture of your text. However, any formatting you had will be deleted.
   o Use a solution other than special characters. For example, instead of using quotation marks for titles of works, put them in italics and that won't affect character count.
   o Use only one space after the end of sentences. Single spaces after punctuation marks (periods, commas, colons, etc.) only reduce the character counter by one character. If you enter two spaces after a period, HTML coding adds extra spaces.

   Also, save character space by limiting the use of tabs.

8. View the Grant Application Form Tutorial for other helpful tips to assist you in completing the online form.

OUR TOWN: How to Prepare and Submit an Application - Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking

These instructions provide all of the information that you need to submit an application. Submitting an application is a multi-step process. You will interact with the NEA's website, Grants.gov, and the NEA GrantsOnline™ System (NEA-GO). We urge you to read these instructions in their entirety before you begin the application process.

Our Town:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on September 26, 2016

1. View the Our Town Guidelines Webinars:
   - We will conduct a live "How to Apply" webinar on July 20, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time followed by a Q&A session. Click here to register for the upcoming webinar and for an archive of the webinar after it is concluded.
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   Send new information that significantly affects your application (such as changes in artists or confirmed funding commitments) as soon as possible to the staff. Remember to include your organization's name and NEA application number.

If you have questions about your application, please contact the staff at OT@arts.gov.

OUR TOWN: Step 1 - Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov for Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking

Complete and submit the SF-424 (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form) to Grants.gov.

Register or renew/verify Grants.gov and SAM.gov registration | Download the SF-424 | Fill-out the SF-424 | Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov | Track Your Application

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- Before submitting the SF-424, your organization must register or renew/verify its current registration with both **Grants.gov** and the **System for Award Management (SAM)**. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your SF-424.
- Go to Grants.gov's **Organization Registration** to create a new organization registration.
- **Grants.gov Contact Center**: Call 1-800-518-4726, e-mail support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at **Support**. The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **SAM Federal Service Desk**: Call 1-866-606-8220 or see the information posted on the SAM website at **SAM User Help**.
- You do not need to complete the registration process to download the SF-424 and begin to prepare your material (see below). However, you will need the Grants.gov Username and Password that you obtain during the registration process to submit your SF-424.
- Exceptions to the deadline will be considered only for those issues related to registration or renewal. Maintain documentation (with dates) of your efforts to register or renew by at least August 22 with the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), System for Award Management (SAM), or Grants.gov.
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2. Download the SF-424:

- First, verify your software. You must have a version of Adobe Reader that is supported by Grants.gov installed on your computer before you download the application package containing the SF-424 from Grants.gov. Please go to "Download Software" to see the compatible versions of Adobe Reader or to download and install Adobe Reader.
- Access the SF-424 on Grants.gov by clicking on the link for your deadline:

DOWNLOAD

[Funding Opportunity Number 2016NEA01OT]

This will bring you to the "Selected Grant Applications for Download" screen. Next, download the Grants.gov "Grant Application Package." Enter the name of your organization in the "Application Filing Name" yellow field. Click on the "Save" button and **save the application package to a location on your computer or network where you can find it readily**. Please note that Grants.gov uses the term "application" and "application package" when all you'll submit is the SF-424 form (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance). Please note that you will submit the substantial part of your application during Step 2.

Do not open a Grants.gov "Workspace" environment to create, prepare, or submit your application materials.

3. Fill out the SF-424:

NOTE: All asterisked (*) items and yellow fields on this form are required and must be completed before you will be able to submit the form. Do not type in all capital letters when completing the form. Enter information directly into the form. Do not copy from an old SF-424 or another document and paste into the form.

1. Name of Federal Agency: Pre-populated.

2. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: Pre-populated.

3. Date Received: This will be filled automatically with the date that you submit your SF-424; leave blank.

4. Funding Opportunity Number: Pre-populated.

5. Applicant Information:

a. Legal Name: The name provided here must be the applicant's legal name as it appears in the current IRS 501(c)(3) status letter or in the official document that identifies the organization as a unit of state or local government, or as a federally recognized tribal community or tribe. (Do not use your organization's popular name, if different.)

If you are a parent organization that is applying on behalf of an eligible independent component, do not list the name of the independent component here. You will be asked for that information later.

b. Address:

Use Street 1 for your street address or post office box number, whichever is used for your U.S. Postal Service mailing address. Street 2 is not a required field and should be used **only** when a Suite or Room Number or other similar information is a necessary part of your address. Do **not** use Street 2 to give a second address for your organization.

In the Zip/Postal Code box, organizations in the United States should enter the **full 9-digit zip code** that was assigned by the U.S. Postal Service. If you do not know your full zip code, you may look it up at **www.usps.com/zip4/**

d. Type of Applicant: Select the item that best characterizes your organization from the menu in the first drop down box. Additional choices are optional.

e. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): Enter the 9-digit number that was assigned by the Internal Revenue Service; do not use a Social Security Number.

f. Organizational DUNS: All organizational applicants for federal funds must have a DUNS number, which is recognized as the universal standard for identifying organizations worldwide. **The number that you enter here must agree with the number (either 9 or 13 digits) that you used with the SAM (System for Award Management) as part of the Grants.gov registration. Otherwise, your SF-424 will not be validated by Grants.gov and will be rejected.**

g. Congressional District: Enter the number of the Congressional District where the applicant organization is located. Use the following format: 2 character State Abbreviation-3 character District Number. For example, if your organization is located in the 5th Congressional District of California, enter "CA-005." If your state has a single At-Large Representative or your territory has a single Delegate, enter your 2 character state/territory abbreviation and "-000." If you need help determining your district, go to **www.house.gov** and use the "Find Your Representative" tool.

6. **Project Information**:

a. Project Title: Provide a brief descriptive title for your proposed project. For example: Artist Communities: To support An Exhibition of the Works of Georgia O'Keeffe.

b. Project Description: In two or three **brief** sentences, clearly describe your specific project, not your organization. Begin the first sentence with "To support" and include the name of the project. Follow this with up to two more sentences that describe the type of project, the target population that will be served, and where the project will take place during the requested period of performance. For examples, see **Recent Grants**.

Please note:

This field on the form has a character limit of 1,000, including spaces. Even if you have less than 1,000 characters, Grants.gov may translate special characters (e.g., apostrophes) in a way that will cause your SF-424 to be rejected. This can happen if you "cut and paste" from an old SF-424 or another document into the form. We strongly encourage you to write a succinct project description and double check the number of characters.

c. Proposed Project Start Date/End Date: Enter the beginning and ending dates for your requested period of performance, i.e., the span of time necessary to plan, execute, and close out your proposed project. The start date should be the first day of the month, and the end date should be the last day of the month. Our support of a project may start on or after **August 1, 2017**. Generally, a period of performance of up to two years is allowed. Your budget should include only the activities and costs incurred during the requested period of performance.

7. Project Director:

Provide the requested information for the Project Director. Select a Prefix (e.g., Ms., Mr.) even though this is not a required field.

Provide contact information, including an e-mail address, that will be valid through the announcement date for your category.

8. Primary Contact/Grant Administrator:

Provide the requested information for the individual who should be contacted on all matters involving this application and the administration of any grant that may be awarded. For colleges and universities, this person is often a Sponsored Research, Sponsored Programs, or Contracts and Grants Officer. Select a Prefix even though this is not a required field. For the Telephone number field, use the following format: 000-000-0000.

In some organizations, particularly smaller ones, this individual may be the same as the Project Director. If this is the case, you may check the "Same as Project Director" box and not repeat information that you have already provided in Item 7. (If the Primary Contact/Grant Administrator is the same as the Authorizing Official, please complete all items under both 8 and 9 even though there will be some repetition.)

9. Authorized Representative:

Enter the requested information for the AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) who is authorized to submit this application to Grants.gov. Select a Prefix even though this is not a required field. The AOR must have the legal authority to obligate your organization (e. g., be a senior member of the staff such as an ED, Director of Development, etc.). See specific requirements for who can serve as an AOR for colleges and universities. Contractors or administrative support staff cannot serve as an AOR. By clicking the "I Agree" box at the top of Item 9, this individual will be certifying compliance with relevant federal requirements on your

organization's behalf. (These requirements can be found in the "**Assurance of Compliance**" section of these guidelines.) The "Signature of Authorized Representative" and "Date Signed" boxes will be populated by Grants.gov upon submission of the SF-424.

4. Submit the SF-424 to Grants.gov:

- To begin the submission process, click the "**Save & Submit**" button. [This button will not become active (and turn from light to dark gray) until you have saved your SF-424 with all required fields completed. Clicking this button will prompt you to save your application package one last time. When asked if you want to replace the existing file, click "Yes." You will then be reconnected to Grants.gov and the Internet.] **You will be prompted to provide your Grants.gov Username and Password that you obtained during registration**.
- Click the "**Login**" button. This will bring you to the "Application Submission Verification and Signature" screen, which provides a summary of the Funding Opportunity for which you are applying. Click the "Sign and Submit Application" button to complete the process. **Be certain that you are satisfied with your SF-424 before you click this button. No revisions to your SF-424 are possible through Grants.gov once it is submitted**.
- Submit your SF-424 no later than September 2 to give yourself ample time to resolve any problems you might encounter. You take a significant risk by waiting until the day of the deadline to submit.
- We will not accept late SF-424s or late SF-424s that are the result of user error, including failure to verify that your SF-424 was validated and accepted by the Grants.gov system through **Track My Application**. Exceptions may be made if you can provide documentation dating from September 2 that, in the judgment of the National Endowment for the Arts, indicates a technological failure on the part of Grants.gov. We will consider and address your situation as appropriate.
- Failure to successfully submit the SF-424 form through Grants.gov will make you ineligible to complete Step 2 of the application process.

5. Track Your Application:

- Verify that your SF-424 was validated and accepted by the Grants.gov system. Go to **Track My Application** to confirm the validation and track the progress of your SF-424 submission through Grants.gov. Do not wait until the day of the deadline to verify your submission in case you encounter any difficulties.

6. Prepare to Complete Step 2:

- Read the **Step 2 instructions** to learn about how and when to access the NEA-GO system to fill out and submit the NEA Grant Application Form and upload items to NEA-GO.

Additional Help

For additional help on how to use Grants.gov, please see the Grants.gov website at **Support.** You also can send e-mail to the Grants.gov Contact Center at **support@grants.gov** or call them at 1-800-518-4726, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Fill out and submit the NEA Grant Application Form and upload items to NEA-GO.

You will use the NEA GrantsOnline™ System (NEA-GO) to complete Step 2 of the application process. You must first have successfully completed Step 1 (submitting the SF-424 to Grants.gov) by the application deadline of record.

Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	September 12, 2016 by 11:59 pm Eastern Time
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	September 19, 2016 to 11:59 pm Eastern Time on September 26, 2016

Do not attempt to complete Step 2 before NEA-GO becomes available to you on these dates. Your log on credentials will be created for you. Do not log in to the system early and create your own NEA-GO registration. If you do, it will prevent you from accessing the system.

1. Accessing NEA-GO:

- **Log on to NEA-GO at: http://nea.cloud.culturegrants.org/index/login**

- **User Name = Grants.gov Tracking Number**

  (Example: "GRANT12345678")

- **Password = Agency Tracking Number/NEA Application Number**

  (Example: "17-123456")

- **Once you are logged on to NEA-GO, select the "Link to Formset" icon on the My Forms page to access the Grant Application Form**

How do I find my Grants.gov tracking number? Your Grants.gov tracking number is assigned to you by Grants.gov at the time you submit your SF-424. A confirmation screen will appear once your SF-424 submission is complete. Your Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of this screen. Remember to save this number.

How do I find my Agency Tracking #/NEA Application Number? The NEA assigns the number to your application 1-2 business days after you submit your SF-424, but no earlier than

September 2. The number is not available before this date. Log on to Grants.gov with the Grants.gov Username and Password that you used to submit your SF-424. Select the *Check My Application* feature to find your Agency Tracking#/NEA Application Number. NOTE: *Check My Application* is a separate feature from Track My Application at Grants.gov.

For specific help on how to complete your application, please review the instructions in these guidelines or **contact the staff at OT@arts.gov**.

2. Fill out the Grant Application Form

You will submit a substantial part of your application through the Grant Application Form (GAF) in NEA-GO, including:

- Answers to narrative questions about your organization and project.
- Financial information about your organization and project.
- Bios of key individuals.
- Upload work samples and statements of support.

Click below to see the application questions, instructions, and information about required application materials that you will submit through the Grant Application Form in NEA-GO.

Our Town FY17 Step 2 Application Instructions:

[DOWNLOAD INSTRUCTIONS](#)

You should prepare your responses and material well in advance of the deadline and have them fully ready to upload once NEA-GO opens for you. You will not have access to the Grant Application Form until NEA-GO opens for you to submit your application materials on the dates noted above.

Note: We strongly urge you to complete and submit the Grant Application Form and upload materials outside of NEA-GO's hours of heaviest usage, generally 8:00 pm to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline.

HELPFUL TIPS:

5. Submit your materials to NEA-GO prior to the deadline to give yourself ample time to resolve any problems that you might encounter. You take a significant risk by waiting until the day of the deadline to submit.
   - Most problems can be solved by changing your browser. If that doesn't work, change devices.
   - NEA staff will not be available to help you after 5:30 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline.

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6. Don't forget to hit the "Submit" button when you are ready to submit your application. If you do not hit the "Submit" button, your application will not be received.
7. NEA-GO closes at 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day of the deadline. Be sure you have finished uploading your materials and hit the "Submit" button prior to that time.
8. You will receive confirmation of your successful submission in two ways: 1) a pop up on your screen, and 2) an email from noreply at culturegrants.org. Maintain documentation of your successful submission. If you modify your application after you submit, you will not receive additional confirmations.

   You also can confirm that your application was received when you log in to NEA-GO. On the first screen it will say "Received" if your application has been received. If your application has not yet been received, it will say "In Progress."

9. After submitting your application, you may log back into NEA-GO and make modifications to your submission up until the system closes on the day of the deadline. Remember to hit the "Save" and "Submit" button again prior the deadline.
10. You may print a copy of your application at any time, whether in draft or final form, for your records. The print icon is located on the My Forms page.
11. Some special characters (such as ampersands, quotation marks, apostrophes, and angle brackets) take up more character counts than others in webforms, including the Grant Application Form. This is because certain characters are translated into HTML code which takes up more than one character space. If you notice a higher than expected character count when you enter information directly into the Grant Application Form or copy and paste from your word processing program, here are a few tips:
    o Transfer your text into a text-only utility like Notepad before pasting it into the Grant Application Form. This will delete hidden HTML code to ensure the proper capture of your text. However, any formatting you had will be deleted.
    o Use a solution other than special characters. For example, instead of using quotation marks for titles of works, put them in italics and that won't affect character count.
    o Use only one space after the end of sentences. Single spaces after punctuation marks (periods, commas, colons, etc.) only reduce the character counter by one character. If you enter two spaces after a period, HTML coding adds extra spaces.

    Also, save character space by limiting the use of tabs.

12. View the [Grant Application Form Tutorial](#) for other helpful tips to assist you in completing the online form.

OUR TOWN: Application Review

Review Criteria

Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

Applications are reviewed on the basis of agency-wide criteria of artistic excellence and artistic merit.

The following are considered during the review of applications:

The **artistic excellence** of the project, which includes the following:

- Quality of the artists, arts or design professionals, arts organizations, works of art, or services that the project will involve, as appropriate for the community in which the project takes place.

  Artistic excellence is evaluated based on the material and work samples submitted with the application. This includes a description of the process and criteria for the selection of artists, design professionals, arts organizations, works of art, or services to ensure artistic excellence; and work samples of selected or proposed artists, design professionals, arts organizations, works of art, or services that demonstrate artistic excellence. See "How to Prepare and Submit an Application" for the material and work samples that are required to ensure and demonstrate artistic excellence.

The **artistic merit** of the project, which includes the following:

- Potential of the project to achieve results consistent with the NEA objective for *Livability: Strengthening communities through the arts*. This includes the potential to:
    - Have a vision for enhancing the social and/or economic livability of the community.
    - Incorporate the needs of existing residents and institutions in the community.
    - Reflect community plans for the future.
    - Support artists, design professionals, and arts organizations by integrating the arts and design into the fabric of civic life and/or community plans.
    - Reflect creative approaches to addressing community challenges or priorities.
- Strength of the proposed partnership, including the required partners, and engagement of the private and public sectors in support of the project.
- Where appropriate, potential to reach underserved populations such as those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability.
- Where appropriate, alignment with other federal programs. This may include how the project will establish consistency with other place-based federal grant programs and policies, including, but not limited to, those from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), such as Consolidated Plans, Analysis of impediments to Fair Housing

Choice, Long Range Transportation Plans, and Asset Management Plans, as well as strategies to modify existing policies.

- Appropriateness of the project to the partners' missions and the community in which the project will take place. Ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the:
  - Appropriateness of the budget, its feasibility, level of community support, and strategy for maintaining the work of the project.
  - Likelihood that the proposed phase of the project will be completed within the proposed period of performance.
  - Quality and clarity of the project goals and design.
  - Resources involved.
  - Qualifications of the project's personnel.
- Extent to which the project engages the public in planning for and participating in the project.
- Appropriateness of the proposed performance measurements, including, as appropriate, plans for documentation and evaluation of the overall project results.

If two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, local government, or within the same geographic area, the capacity of the lead applicant, local government, or geographic area to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

What Happens to Your Application

All applications are reviewed according to the review criteria by an advisory panel comprised of qualified peer experts, including at least one knowledgeable layperson, representing a range of multidisciplinary art, design, and economic and community development fields. Panel recommendations are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts, which then makes recommendations to the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Chairman reviews the Council's recommendations and makes the final decision on all grant awards. Pending the availability of funding, it is anticipated that applicants will be notified of award or rejection in April 2017.

NOTE: All recommended applications undergo a review to evaluate risk posed by the applicant prior to making a federal award. This may include past performance on grants, meeting reporting deadlines, compliance with terms and conditions, audit findings, etc.

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Review Criteria

Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking

Applications are reviewed on the basis of agency-wide criteria of artistic excellence and artistic merit.

The following are considered during the review of applications:

The **artistic excellence** of the project, which includes the following:

- Quality of the arts- and place-based consultants and organizations that the project will involve. This includes any information provided which shows the depth of arts and place-based knowledge present in the bios and work samples.

The **artistic merit** of the project, which includes the following:

- Potential of the project to achieve results consistent with the NEA objective for *Livability: Strengthening communities through the arts*. This includes the potential to:
    o Incorporate a systemic approach to building knowledge about creative placemaking for the organization and broader field.
    o Expand the capacity of artists and arts organizations to work more effectively with economic and community development practitioners.
    o Expand the knowledge base in arts and place-based industry associations on equitable community development which creates opportunities for all.
- Strength of the proposed partnership, including the required partners.
- Involvement of the organization's membership, as appropriate.
- Impact and reach of the project.
- Quality of the systems for the management of new ideas, documentation, the potential for learning, and sharing of technical assistance programming.
- Effectiveness of the technical assistance delivery.
- Appropriateness of the project to the organization's mission and the community in which the project will take place.
- Ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the:
    o Appropriateness of the budget, its feasibility, and strategy for maintaining the work of the project.
    o Likelihood that the proposed phase of the project will be completed within the proposed period of performance.
    o Quality and clarity of the project goals and design.
    o Resources involved.
    o Qualifications of the project's personnel.
- Where appropriate, potential to reach underserved populations such as those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability.
- Appropriateness of the proposed performance measurements, including, as appropriate, plans for documentation and evaluation of the overall project results.

If two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, the capacity of the lead applicant to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

What Happens to Your Application

All applications are reviewed according to the review criteria by an advisory panel comprised of qualified peer experts, including at least one knowledgeable layperson, representing a range of multidisciplinary art, design, and economic and community development fields. Panel recommendations are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts, which then makes recommendations to the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Chairman reviews the Council's recommendations and makes the final decision on all grant awards.

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OUR TOWN: Award Administration -Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act Review

If you are recommended for a grant and your project has the potential to effect environmental or historic resources, your project may **be subject to the National Environmental Policy Act** **(NEPA) and/or the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and** the National Endowment for the Arts will conduct a review of your project to ensure that it is in compliance NEPA/NHPA**.**

Examples of such projects include:

- An arts festival in a park.
- The commissioning and installation of an outdoor sculpture or mural, temporary or permanent.
- Design of restoration or rehabilitation of a historic structure.
- Design of a new structure in a historic district or adjacent a historic building.
- A project involving or occurring near a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object that is 50 years old or included/eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

If your project requires review for compliance with the NEPA/NHPA, you will be notified by the National Endowment for the Arts and need to answer additional questions about your project activities. We will conduct a review of your project activities in accordance with NEPA/NHPA. **This review may likely take up to several months and may delay your project's start date, our ability to make a grant award/our ability to release grant funds.**

To learn more about what **questions you will need to answer** for the review of a project **impacted by the National Environmental Policy Act** **and/or the National Historic Preservation Act, see here.**

Changes in Projects

Applicants must notify the National Endowment for the Arts immediately of any significant changes in their project that occur after they have submitted their application. If the project or the organization's capacity changes significantly before an award is made, any funding recommendation may be revised or withdrawn.

Grantees are expected to carry out a project that is consistent with the proposal that was approved for funding by the National Endowment for the Arts. If changes in the project are believed to be necessary, the grantee must send a written request, with justification, to the Grants & Contracts Office prior to the expenditure of grant funds. Approval is not guaranteed. Detailed information is included the NEA General Terms & Conditions for Grants to Organizations.

Project Reporting and Evaluation

We ask all applicants to define what they would like to achieve, how they will evaluate the degree to which it is achieved, and, upon completion of the project, what they have learned from their experiences. Such feedback need not entail large-scale or expensive evaluation efforts. You should do what is feasible and appropriate for your organization and project. When a grant is completed, you must submit a final report and answer questions on your achievements and how these were determined. We recognize that some projects involve risk, and we want to hear about both your successes and failures. Failures can provide valuable learning experiences, and reporting them will have no effect on your ability to receive NEA funds in the future.

All Our Town grantees will be assigned the agency's Livability objective. Before applying, please review the reporting requirements for the agency's Livability objective: **Livability**. Given the nature of Livability projects, benefits are likely to emerge over time and may not be fully measureable during the period of a grant. You will need to provide evidence of progress toward achieving improved livability as appropriate to the project.

Implementation of Title 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

This guidance from the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) combines eight separate documents into one, and is intended to improve clarity and consistency of the pre- and post-award requirements applicable to federal grantees. Changes are also intended to strengthen accountability for federal dollars by improving policies that protect against waste, fraud, and abuse.

Under the authority listed above, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) adopts the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidance in 2 CFR part 200 under §3255.1 Adoption of 2 CFR Part 200. This part gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance and supplements the guidance as needed for the NEA.

Crediting Requirement

Grantees must clearly acknowledge support from the National Endowment for the Arts in their programs and related promotional material including publications and websites. Additional acknowledgment requirements may be provided later.

Administrative Requirements

Beyond the reporting requirements for all grantees, selected *Our Town* grantees may be asked to assist in the collection of additional information that can help the National Endowment for the Arts determine the degree to which agency objectives were achieved. For example, Our Town

grantees may be asked to participate in surveys or interviews, and/or may be asked to assist in publicizing and promoting these data collection efforts. You may be contacted to provide evidence of project accomplishments including, but not limited to, work samples, community action plans, cultural asset studies, programs, reviews, relevant news clippings, and playbills. Please remember that you are required to maintain project documentation for three years following submission of your final report.

We may publish grantees' reports and products on our website. Please note that all federal grantmaking agencies retain a royalty-free right to use all or a portion of grantees' reports and products for federal purposes.

Award Notices

Grant decisions for the Our Town category are expected to be announced in April 2017.

Note that "announcement" is likely to take the form of a preliminary congratulatory note, a request for revisions, or a rejection notification. Official grant award notification (i.e., the grant award letter that is signed by the National Endowment for the Arts Chairman) is the only legal and valid confirmation of award. This can take several months to reach you depending on a number of factors such as whether a revised budget is needed for your project, the number of awards to be processed, whether the agency has its appropriation from Congress, etc.

Implementation of Title 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

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Under the authority listed above, the National Endowment for the Arts adopts the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidance in 2 CFR part 200 under §3255.1 Adoption of 2 CFR Part 200. This part gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance and supplements the guidance as needed for the National Endowment for the Arts.

General Terms & Conditions

Federal and agency requirements that relate to grants awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts are highlighted in our *General Terms & Conditions* (GTC). The GTC incorporates the adoption of 2 CFR Part 200 by reference. The document also explicitly identifies where the National Endowment for the Arts has selected options offered in the regulation, such as budget waivers and requirements for use of program income. It also includes agency requirements for matching funds reporting requirements,

amendment processes, and termination actions. Grantees must review, understand, and comply with these requirements. Failure to do so may result in having a grant terminated and/or returning funds to the National Endowment for the Arts, among other things.

Legal Requirements

PLEASE NOTE: This list highlights some of the significant legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or grantee however, it is not exhaustive.   More information regarding these and other legal requirements may be found at Appendix A of our General Terms & Conditions (GTC) which sets forth the National Policy and Other Legal Requirements, Statutes, and Regulations that Govern Your Award. Please note that there may be other applicable legal requirements that are not listed here.

1. By law, the National Endowment for the Arts may support only those organizations that:
   - **Are tax-exempt**. Organizations qualifying for this status must meet the following criteria:

     1. No part of net earnings may benefit a private stockholder or individual.
     2. Donations to the organization must be allowable as a charitable contribution under
        Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

     For further information, go to the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) website.

     Note that organizations who have had their IRS status revoked are not eligible for National Endowment for the Arts support. It is your responsibility to ensure that your status is current at the time of the application and throughout the life of your award.

   - **Compensate all professional performers and related or supporting professional personnel on National Endowment for the Arts-supported projects at no less than the prevailing minimum compensation**. (This requirement is in accordance with regulations that have been issued by the Secretary of Labor in 29 C.F.R. Part 505. This part does not provide information on specific compensation levels.)
   - **Ensure that no part of any National Endowment for the Arts-supported project will be performed or engaged in under working conditions which are unsanitary or hazardous or dangerous** to the health and safety of the employees involved.
2. **Some legal requirements apply to every applicant, for example:**
   - **Compliance with the federal requirements that are outlined in the "Assurance of Compliance" below.**
   - **Debarment and Suspension procedures**. The applicant must comply with the record keeping and other requirements set forth in Subpart C of 2 CFR 180, as adopted by the Arts Endowment in 2 CFR 32.3254. Failure to comply may result

in the debarment or suspension of the grantee and the NEA suspending, terminating and/or recovering funds.
- **Federal Debt Status** (OMB Circular A-129). Processing of applications will be suspended when applicants are delinquent on federal tax or non-tax debts, including judgment liens against property for a debt to the federal government. An organization's debt status is displayed in the System for Award Management (SAM). New awards will not be made if an applicant is still in debt status as of September 1.
- **Labor Standards** (29 C.F.R. pt 505).   If a grant is awarded, the grantee must comply with the standards set out in Labor Standards on Projects or Productions Assisted by Grants from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.
- **The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988** (41 U.S.C. 701 et seq. and 2 C.F.R. Part 3256). The grantee is required to publish a statement regarding its drug-free workplace program as well as comply with other requirements.

3. **Some legal requirements apply depending upon what the grant is funding, for example:**

   If your project activities have the potential to impact any structure that is eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, adjacent to a structure that is eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, or located in an historic district, you will be asked to provide additional information about your project or take additional action so that the agency can review and comply with the **National Historic Preservation Act** (NHPA). NHPA also applies to any planning activities that may affect historic properties or districts. The additional agency review must be completed prior to any agency funds being released.

   - If your project activities have the potential to impact the environment or environmentally sensitive resources, you will be required to provide information in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The additional agency review must be completed prior to any agency funds being released.
   - **If your** contract is over $2,000 and involves the construction, alteration, or repair of public buildings or public works, it must contain a clause setting forth the minimum wages to be paid to laborers and mechanics employed under the contract in accordance with The Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA)

4. **Some legal requirements apply depending upon who the Applicant is, for example:**

   The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) – which applies to any organization that controls or possesses Native American human remains and associated funerary objects and receives Federal funding, even for a purpose unrelated to the Act (25 USC 3001 et seq.)

<u>Assurance of Compliance</u>

By signing and submitting its application form on grants.gov, the Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined below and all related National Endowment for

the Arts regulations and will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine compliance.

The Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined below and all related Arts Endowment regulations and will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine compliance.

The Arts Endowment may conduct a review of your organization to ensure that it is in compliance. If the Endowment determines that a grantee has failed to comply with these statutes, it may suspend, terminate, and/or recover funds. This assurance is subject to judicial enforcement.

The Applicant certifies that it does not discriminate:

- On the grounds of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C.1110;
- On the grounds of disability, in accordance with **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** (29 U.S.C. 794) and the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** ("ADA"), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 12101-12213), implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C. 1151. The ADA's requirements apply regardless of whether you receive federal funds.
- On the basis of age, in accordance with the **Age Discrimination Act of 1975** (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.) implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C.1156.
- On the basis of sex, in any education program or activity, in accordance with **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

Applicant will inform the public that persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age may file a complaint with the Director of Civil Rights at the NEA.

Applicant will forward all complaints for investigation and any finding issued by a Federal or state court or by a Federal or state administrative agency to:

Director, Office of Civil Rights
National Endowment for the Arts
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506

Applicant shall maintain records of its compliance and submission for three (3) years. The Applicant will compile, maintain and permit access to records as required by applicable regulations, guidelines or other directives.

The Applicant must also certify that it will obtain assurances of compliance from all subrecipients and will require all subrecipients of NEA funds to comply with these requirements.

The United States has the right to seek judicial or administrative enforcement of this assurance.

For further information and copies of the nondiscrimination regulations identified above, please contact the Office of Civil Rights at 202/682-5454 or 202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y. For inquiries about limited English proficiency, please go to http://www.lep.gov, the FOIA Reading Room, or contact the Office of General Counsel at GeneralCounsel@arts.gov or 202/682-5418.

OUR TOWN: Award Administration - Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking

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Crediting Requirement

Grantees must clearly acknowledge support from the National Endowment for the Arts in their programs and related promotional material including publications and websites. Additional acknowledgment requirements may be provided later.

Administrative Requirements

Beyond the reporting requirements for all grantees, selected *Our Town* grantees may be asked to assist in the collection of additional information that can help the National Endowment for the Arts determine the degree to which agency objectives were achieved. For example, Our Town grantees may be asked to participate in surveys or interviews, and/or may be asked to assist in publicizing and promoting these data collection efforts. You may be contacted to provide evidence of project accomplishments including, but not limited to, work samples, community action plans, cultural asset studies, programs, reviews, relevant news clippings, and playbills. Please remember that you are required to maintain project documentation for three years following submission of your final report.

We may publish grantees' reports and products on our website. Please note that all federal grantmaking agencies retain a royalty-free right to use all or a portion of grantees' reports and products for federal purposes.

At the end of the grant period, grantees will be required to submit a final product that documents lessons learned from the funded activities. The final product must include:

- An *abstract* of the project consisting of 2-3 short paragraphs summarizing the project's goals, partners, and project activities.
- An *executive summary* of the project, which should be no longer than 10 pages, and includes:
    - A summary that outlines the types of resources created, knowledge disseminated, and technical assistance delivered during the project period.
    - A summary of activities that took place, and links to any electronic final work products, including online resources, white papers, webinars, technical assistance, mentorship programming, etc.
    - Descriptions of project participants and audiences engaged.
    - Ideas on ways to scale activities conducted during this project.
    - A summary of any evaluation conducted and key lessons learned.

    The exact format and organization of the final products may vary depending on the project scope and dissemination plans.

The lessons learned for grantee projects will be widely disseminated and therefore must be targeted toward a variety of audiences.

The National Endowment for the Arts reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish or otherwise use these materials for federal purposes and to authorize others to do so (see 2CFR Part 200.315, Intangible Property). "Federal purposes" include the use of award products in activities or programs undertaken by the federal government, in response to a governmental request, or as otherwise required by federal law. However, the federal government's use of copyrighted materials is not intended to interfere with or disadvantage the recipient or assignee in the sale and distribution of the award product.

It is our intention to publish grantees' lessons learned on its website.

Award Notices

Grant decisions for the Our Town category are expected to be announced in April 2017.

Note that "announcement" is likely to take the form of a preliminary congratulatory note, a request for revisions, or a rejection notification. Official grant award notification (i.e., the grant award letter that is signed by the National Endowment for the Arts Chairman) is the only legal and valid confirmation of award. This can take several months to reach you depending on a number of factors such as whether a revised budget is needed for your project, the number of awards to be processed, whether the agency has its appropriation from Congress, etc.

Implementation of Title 2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards

This guidance from the federal government's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) combines eight separate documents into one, and is intended to improve clarity and consistency of the pre- and post-award requirements applicable to federal grantees. Changes are also intended to strengthen accountability for federal dollars by improving policies that protect against waste, fraud, and abuse.

Under the authority listed above, the National Endowment for the Arts adopts the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidance in 2 CFR part 200 under §3255.1 Adoption of 2 CFR Part 200. This part gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance and supplements the guidance as needed for the National Endowment for the Arts.

General Terms & Conditions

Federal and agency requirements that relate to grants awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts are highlighted in our *General Terms & Conditions* (GTC). The GTC incorporates the adoption of 2 CFR Part 200 by reference. The document also

explicitly identifies where the National Endowment for the Arts has selected options offered in the regulation, such as budget waivers and requirements for use of program income. It also includes agency requirements for matching funds reporting requirements, amendment processes, and termination actions. Grantees must review, understand, and comply with these requirements. Failure to do so may result in having a grant terminated and/or returning funds to the National Endowment for the Arts, among other things.

Legal Requirements

PLEASE NOTE: This list highlights some of the significant legal requirements that may apply to an applicant or grantee however, it is not exhaustive.   More information regarding these and other legal requirements may be found at Appendix A of our General Terms & Conditions (GTC) which sets forth the National Policy and Other Legal Requirements, Statutes, and Regulations that Govern Your Award. Please note that there may be other applicable legal requirements that are not listed here.

5. By law, the National Endowment for the Arts may support only those organizations that:
    - **Are tax-exempt**. Organizations qualifying for this status must meet the following criteria:

      1. No part of net earnings may benefit a private stockholder or individual.
      2. Donations to the organization must be allowable as a charitable contribution under

         Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

      For further information, go to the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) website.

      Note that organizations who have had their IRS status revoked are not eligible for National Endowment for the Arts support. It is your responsibility to ensure that your status is current at the time of the application and throughout the life of your award.

    - **Compensate all professional performers and related or supporting professional personnel on National Endowment for the Arts-supported projects at no less than the prevailing minimum compensation**. (This requirement is in accordance with regulations that have been issued by the Secretary of Labor in 29 C.F.R. Part 505. This part does not provide information on specific compensation levels.)
    - **Ensure that no part of any National Endowment for the Arts-supported project will be performed or engaged in under working conditions which are unsanitary or hazardous or dangerous** to the health and safety of the employees involved.
6. **Some legal requirements apply to every applicant, for example:**
    - **Compliance with the federal requirements that are outlined in the "Assurance of Compliance"** below.

- **Debarment and Suspension procedures**. The applicant must comply with the record keeping and other requirements set forth in Subpart C of 2 CFR 180, as adopted by the Arts Endowment in 2 CFR 32.3254. Failure to comply may result in the debarment or suspension of the grantee and the NEA suspending, terminating and/or recovering funds.
- **Federal Debt Status** (OMB Circular A-129). Processing of applications will be suspended when applicants are delinquent on federal tax or non-tax debts, including judgment liens against property for a debt to the federal government. An organization's debt status is displayed in the System for Award Management (SAM). New awards will not be made if an applicant is still in debt status as of September 1.
- **Labor Standards** (29 C.F.R. pt 505).   If a grant is awarded, the grantee must comply with the standards set out in Labor Standards on Projects or Productions Assisted by Grants from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities.
- **The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988** (41 U.S.C. 701 et seq. and 2 C.F.R. Part 3256). The grantee is required to publish a statement regarding its drug-free workplace program as well as comply with other requirements.

7. **Some legal requirements apply depending upon what the grant is funding, for example:**

   If your project activities have the potential to impact any structure that is eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, adjacent to a structure that is eligible for or on the National Register of Historic Places, or located in an historic district, you will be asked to provide additional information about your project or take additional action so that the agency can review and comply with the **National Historic Preservation Act** (NHPA). NHPA also applies to any planning activities that may affect historic properties or districts. The additional agency review must be completed prior to any agency funds being released.

   - If your project activities have the potential to impact the environment or environmentally sensitive resources, you will be required to provide information in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The additional agency review must be completed prior to any agency funds being released.
   - **If your** contract is over $2,000 and involves the construction, alteration, or repair of public buildings or public works, it must contain a clause setting forth the minimum wages to be paid to laborers and mechanics employed under the contract in accordance with The Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA)

8. **Some legal requirements apply depending upon who the Applicant is, for example:**

   The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.) – which applies to any organization that controls or possesses Native American human remains and associated funerary objects and receives Federal funding, even for a purpose unrelated to the Act (25 USC 3001 et seq.)

Assurance of Compliance

By signing and submitting its application form on grants.gov, the Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined below and all related National Endowment for the Arts regulations and will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine compliance.

The Applicant certifies that it is in compliance with the statutes outlined below and all related Arts Endowment regulations and will maintain records and submit the reports that are necessary to determine compliance.

The Arts Endowment may conduct a review of your organization to ensure that it is in compliance. If the Endowment determines that a grantee has failed to comply with these statutes, it may suspend, terminate, and/or recover funds. This assurance is subject to judicial enforcement.

The Applicant certifies that it does not discriminate:

- On the grounds of race, color, or national origin, in accordance with **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C.1110;
- On the grounds of disability, in accordance with **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** (29 U.S.C. 794) and the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** ("ADA"), as amended, (42 U.S.C. 12101-12213), implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C. 1151. The ADA's requirements apply regardless of whether you receive federal funds.
- On the basis of age, in accordance with the **Age Discrimination Act of 1975** (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.) implemented by the NEA at 45 U.S.C.1156.
- On the basis of sex, in any education program or activity, in accordance with **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.).

Applicant will inform the public that persons who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, sex, or age may file a complaint with the Director of Civil Rights at the NEA.

Applicant will forward all complaints for investigation and any finding issued by a Federal or state court or by a Federal or state administrative agency to:

Director, Office of Civil Rights
National Endowment for the Arts
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506

Applicant shall maintain records of its compliance and submission for three (3) years. The Applicant will compile, maintain and permit access to records as required by applicable regulations, guidelines or other directives.

The Applicant must also certify that it will obtain assurances of compliance from all subrecipients and will require all subrecipients of NEA funds to comply with these requirements.

The United States has the right to seek judicial or administrative enforcement of this assurance.

For further information and copies of the nondiscrimination regulations identified above, please contact the Office of Civil Rights at 202/682-5454 or 202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y. For inquiries about limited English proficiency, please go to http://www.lep.gov, the FOIA Reading Room, or contact the Office of General Counsel at GeneralCounsel@arts.gov or 202/682-5418.

OUR TOWN: Contacts

If you have questions about how to complete your application, please contact the staff at **OT@arts.gov** with your question or to set up a time to speak to staff. Due to the high volume of interest in Our Town, please allow 24 to 48 hours for staff to return your e-mail or call.

If you have questions about SAM or Grants.gov:

- **SAM Federal Service Desk**: Call 1-866-606-8220 or see the information posted on the SAM website at SAM User Help.
- **Grants.gov Contact Center**: Call 1-800-518-4726, e-mail support@grants.gov, or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov website at Support. The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

OUR TOWN: Other Information

Staff Visits

Applicants may be asked to provide up to four complimentary tickets for staff visits.

Standards for Service

The National Endowment for the Arts has set the following standards for serving applicants. We pledge to:

- Treat you with courtesy and efficiency.
- Respond to inquiries and correspondence promptly.
- Provide clear and accurate information about our policies and procedures.
- Provide timely information about funding opportunities and make guidelines available promptly.
- Promptly acknowledge the receipt of your application.
- Ensure that all eligible applications are reviewed thoughtfully and fairly.

We welcome your comments on how we're meeting these standards. Please address them to: webmgr@arts.gov, attention: Standards for Service.

For questions about these guidelines or your application, contact OT@arts.gov.

In addition, applicants will receive an invitation to participate in a voluntary survey to provide feedback on the grant application guidelines on our website and any experiences consulting with our staff.

Reporting Burden

The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated at an average of 29.5 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. We welcome any suggestions that you might have on improving the guidelines and making them as easy to use as possible. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: webmgr@arts.gov, attention: Reporting Burden. Note: Applicants are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

OUR TOWN: Frequently Asked Questions for Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects

Basics | Review Process | Other National Endowment for the Arts Grants | Budget and Matching Funds | Eligible Partners | Local Government Entity | Letters of Endorsement/Statements of Support | Other

BASICS

Q: What is "creative placemaking?"

Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work - placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies. The online storybook 'Exploring Our Town' has illustrative examples of Our Town grant projects and insights into doing creative placemaking for practitioners.

Q: Could you tell us about the future of the *Our Town* initiative?

A: It is our hope that *Our Town* will continue as an annual program, but as with all federal programs it is subject to funding availability.

Q: What is the success rate for applicants?

A: Based on numbers from previous years, Our Town applications have a success rate of roughly 25%.

Q: If we received an *Our Town* grant last year, can we apply again this year?

A: Yes, you may apply to the *Our Town* category for FY 2017 for a **distinctly different project**, **or a distinctly different phase of the project,** from that which was funded.

Q: How long can my grant period be?

A: Your grant period may be up to two years in length, and may start on August 1, 2017, or any time thereafter. If your project is part of a multi-year initiative, you may describe the broader vision but your application, including the budget, should reflect only the activities or phases of work that will occur within the grant period.

Q: How do I know if my community is eligible?

A: Every community in the U.S. can apply for *Our Town* funding.

Q: Will projects in small towns and rural areas be competitive?

A: Yes. We are seeking a diverse range of applicants and encourage communities of all sizes to apply.

REVIEW PROCESS

Q: How will the projects be evaluated?

A: Congress specified in our authorizing legislation that "artistic excellence and artistic merit" are the criteria by which all applications must be evaluated. For more detailed information about how artistic excellence and artistic merit apply to *Our Town* projects, see the "Review Criteria" in the guidelines.

Q. How can I demonstrate artistic excellence for my proposed project?

A. Artistic excellence is evaluated based on the material and work samples submitted with the application. This includes a description of the process and criteria for the selection of artists, design professionals, arts organizations, works of art, or services to ensure artistic excellence; and work samples of selected or proposed artists, design professionals, arts organizations, works of art, or services that demonstrate artistic excellence.

Q: Who reviews and selects grantees?

A: All applications will be reviewed according to the review criteria of artistic excellence and artistic merit by an advisory panel composed of qualified peer experts, including at least one knowledgeable layperson, representing a range of multidisciplinary art, design, and economic and community development fields. Panel recommendations are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts, which then makes recommendations to the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Chairman reviews the Council's recommendations and makes the final decision on all grant awards. A list of past Our Town panelists is available here (LINK).

Q: Can staff help me with my application?

A: Members of Design staff are available to answer specific questions about the application materials and forms. However, we do not review full proposals or provide edits to text or budgets in advance of the application deadline. Please e-mail OT@arts.gov with any questions.

Q: Can I request panel comments or feedback after my project has been reviewed?

A: Yes. After notification of whether you've received a grant or not, you may contact OT@arts.gov to schedule a telephone conversation to receive a summary of panel comments. In such instances, you must contact us no later than 30 days after the official notification.

OTHER NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS GRANTS

Q: Is a project eligible to receive funding from both the *Our Town* and *Art Works* categories?

A: Yes. You may apply to other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities, including *Art Works,* in addition to *Our Town*. In each case, the request must be for a **distinctly different project or a distinctly different phase of the same project**, with a different period of performance and costs**.**

Q: If a project has been recommended for a *Challenge America* grant, may the same project be submitted for additional funding to *Our Town* or *Art Works*?

A: You may apply to *Our Town* or *Art Works* for a project already receiving a *Challenge America* grant, as long as you apply for a distinctly different phase of the project, with a different period of performance and costs.

BUDGET AND MATCHING FUNDS

Q: Do all matching funds need to be committed in advance of the submission deadline?

A: No, but we ask you to designate on the budget form funding that is committed versus funding that is being proposed or sought. Designate committed funding with a (*) after the source.

Q: Can funds raised prior to the project be used as part of the match?

A: Yes. However, matching funds must be spent on eligible activities included as part of the proposed project, during the proposed period of performance.

Q: Can matching funds be in-kind?

A: Yes. No formula exists for how much of the required match can be in-kind. However, reviewers tend to look very carefully at any project with a budget that shows a match that is largely in-kind; generally some cash match is preferred. In all cases, matching funds are evaluated in the context of the project. Remember, if you use in-kind contributions as part of your match, you need to maintain proper documentation. For help in doing this, see our **sample format** for recording in-kind (third party) contributions.

Q: Can federal funds such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) or Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding count toward the match?

A: No. Even though these funds may come through your state, the original source is federal. No matching funds can be from federal sources and these should not appear in your *Our Town* project budget as either income or expenses.

Q: Can community infrastructure costs be considered part of the match for something like a streetscape project?

A: Costs that pertain strictly to preparing a site specifically for the art or design work, such as slabs or pedestals, landscaping that's necessary for the art work or landscaping that is the art work (e.g., a mosaic tiled walkway with landscaping that is required for the work) are allowable.

Costs to prepare the street, including purchase of property, building appropriate access, infrastructure, etc., are not allowable as matching funds.

Q: Are artists' fees eligible expenses?

A: Yes. Fees for individuals involved in the project are eligible, such as fees for artists, performers, designers, architects, facilitators, or other consultants. All fees must be incurred during the period of support.

Q: Is rent for space for an event an eligible expense?

A. Yes, but not for a party or reception.

Q: Can overhead be funded?

A. You may claim administrative costs or overhead as direct costs under "3. Other expenses" on the Project Budget form. (This assumes that there is a basis for justifying the costs as direct costs.) You also may use a federally negotiated indirect cost rate to account for overhead.

Q: Can salaries for administration or additional fundraising be funded?

A: Salaries, contract fees, and stipends for administration and project management are allowed, as well as fund raising specifically for the approved project.

Q: Does sharing the funding between the two required partners count as subgranting or regranting?

A: No. Subgranting is defined as regranting funds to an individual or organization for activities that are conducted independently of your organization and for the benefit of the subgrantee's own program objectives.

ELIGIBLE PARTNERS

Q: Can a private foundation or corporate entity serve as a partner?

A: Partnerships must involve at least two primary partners as defined by these guidelines: a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and a local government entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Only the two primary partners can serve as lead applicants, but additional partners across all sectors are encouraged.

Q: Can a local government arts agency apply and fulfill the role of the cultural organization and the government agency?

A: Yes, but it would still need a nonprofit organization to serve as the other primary partner.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITY

Q: Can a city and county apply for separate projects if the city lies within the county?

A: Yes. Each local government is limited to two applications, so we encourage each community and region to coordinate internally to ensure that only up to two applications per government are submitted. If more than two applications are submitted for a government, we will ask the highest ranking official to select the two applications to move forward. However, if two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, local government, or within the same geographic area, the capacity of the lead applicant, local government, or geographic area to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

All applications must include a formal statement of support for the project from the highest ranking official of the local government participating in the project.

Q: Can a county partner on more than one community?

A: Yes. Each local government is limited to two applications, so we encourage each community and region to coordinate internally to ensure that only two applications per government are submitted. If more than two applications are submitted for a government, we will ask the highest ranking official to select two applications to move forward.

However, if two applications are submitted from a single lead applicant, local government, or within the same geographic area, the capacity of the lead applicant, local government, or geographic area to carry out and sustain two Our Town projects will be considered in the review of applications.

All applications must include a formal statement of support for the project from the highest ranking official of the local government participating in the project.

Q: Can a nonprofit partner on more than one application in different communities?

A: Yes. A nonprofit can partner on more than one application in different communities.

Q: Can a tribal government entity apply?

A: Yes, federally recognized tribal governments qualify as local governments.

Q: Can a regional government entity apply as a primary partner?

A: No, regional government entities do not qualify as local governments and may not apply as a primary partner.

Q: Do public school districts or community colleges qualify as a local government entity?

A: Local education agencies (school districts) and local government-run community colleges are eligible to represent a local government entity they serve. Please note that a letter of endorsement from the highest ranking official for the local government is required regardless of who the local

government partner is, e.g., the superintendent of a school district cannot send the letter. The mayor or city manager must.

Q. Does a state university qualify as a local government entity?

A. No, as with all state level entities, a state university does not qualify as a local government entity under the *Our Town* guidelines. If the state university has nonprofit status designated by the IRS, however, it may serve as the required nonprofit partner on an *Our Town* project.

Q: Does a quasi-local government organization, such as a Business Improvement District (BID) or Chamber of Commerce, qualify as a local government entity?

A: No. Business improvement districts and chambers of commerce do not qualify as local government entities.

Q. Does a U.S. territory qualify as a local government entity?

A. If no local government exists, the territory government can qualify as the local government. In these cases, the territory's state arts agency also may serve as the local government primary partner. However, all grant funds must be passed on to the other partners.

LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT/STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT

Q: If we have a local government entity on board as a partner, do we still need a letter of endorsement from the highest ranking official for the local government?

A: Yes. A letter of endorsement from the highest ranking official for the local government is required. Do not assume that your project is the only one in your community; larger cities may designate one agency or contact to pre-select projects from that city. Each local government is limited to two applications, so we encourage each community and region to coordinate internally to ensure that only two applications per government are submitted. If more than two applications are submitted for a government, we will ask the highest ranking official to select two application to move forward.

Q: How do we reach out to our highest ranking official for the local government to request a letter of endorsement?

A: Each community is managed differently, but we suggest checking with your local arts agency (also known as cultural affairs department or arts commission, etc.) to determine how best to reach out to your highest ranking official for the local government.

Q: Can you guide us as to what the letter of endorsement should contain? Do you have a template that we can use?

A: We do not have a template. However, the document should be a one-page formal endorsement letter, on appropriate letterhead, from the highest ranking official for the local

government (e.g., mayor, county executive, or tribal leader). This letter should reflect the official's familiarity with and support for the project, and must designate your project as the one of the up to two applications being submitted for the local government.

Many local government structures exist. Please provide in your letter a sentence explaining why this official is the leader of the local government. For example, "In the Village of XYZ, our city manager is the highest ranking government official."

Q: We are applying with the local government as lead applicant. Should we submit an endorsement letter from the highest ranking official for the local government, or a statement of support from the nonprofit organization?

A: You are required to submit both.

Q: Is there a limit to the number of statements of support that we can submit?

A: Yes. You may submit up to 10 letters of support. We encourage you to be selective in listing only the partners or individuals that are critical to the project's success, not those that are solely funding sponsors or project beneficiaries. If you are working with multiple agencies within a community, only one statement is necessary. Please keep statements to one page each.

OTHER

Q: What are some examples of measurement tools you'd like to see?

A: See the "Measuring Project Results" page on Exploring Our Town for help determining successful measurements for your project: http://arts.gov/exploring-our-town/project-process/measuring-project-res....

You should propose measurement tools that are feasible and appropriate for your organization and project. We anticipate that the long-term results for *Our Town* projects include measurable community benefits, such as growth in overall levels of social and civic engagement; arts- or design-focused changes in policies, laws, and/or regulations; job and/or revenue growth for the community; or changes in in-and-out migration patterns. You will be asked to address the anticipated results in your application. If you receive a grant, you will be asked to provide evidence of those results at the end of your project. Given the nature of *Our Town* projects, benefits are likely to emerge over time and may not be fully measureable during the period of a grant. You will need to provide evidence of progress toward achieving improved livability as appropriate to the project. We recognize that some projects involve risk, and we want to hear about both your successes and failures. Failures can provide valuable learning experiences, and reporting them will have no effect on your ability to receive National Endowment for the Arts funds in the future.

Beyond the reporting requirements for all grantees, selected *Our Town* grantees may be asked to assist in the collection of additional information that can help the National Endowment for the Arts determine the degree to which agency objectives were achieved. For example, *Our Town*

grantees may be asked to participate in surveys or interviews, and/or may be asked to assist in publicizing and promoting these data collection efforts. You may be contacted to provide evidence of project accomplishments including, but not limited to, work samples, community action plans, cultural asset studies, programs, reviews, relevant news clippings, and playbills. Please remember that you are required to maintain project documentation for three years following submission of your final report.