Challenge America

To support projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations. Matching grants are for $10,000. A minimum cost share/match equal to the grant amount is required.

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	**April 13, 2017** *Register/renew by at least March 22* *Submit by at least April 4*
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	**April 27, 2017 to May 4, 2017**
Earliest Announcement of Grant Award or Rejection	**December 2017**
Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance	**January 1, 2018**

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Grant Program Description

The Challenge America category offers support primarily to small and mid-sized organizations for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations -- those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Age alone (e.g., youth, seniors) does not qualify a group as underserved; at least one of the underserved characteristics noted above also must be present. Grants are available for professional arts programming and for projects that emphasize the potential of the arts in community development.

This category encourages and supports the following objective:

- **Engagement**: Engaging the public with diverse and excellent art.

Challenge America grants:

- Extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations.
- Are limited to the specific types of projects outlined below.
- Are for a fixed amount of $10,000 and require a minimum $10,000 match.

Partnerships can be valuable to the success of these projects. While not required, applicants are encouraged to consider partnerships among organizations, both in and outside of the arts, as appropriate to their project.

To ensure that Challenge America funding reaches new organizations and communities, the NEA has implemented a policy to limit consecutive-year funding.

Starting with grants that were awarded in FY 2013 (as indicated by a grant letter dated on or after October 1, 2012, and a grant number beginning with "13 - 78"), an organization that receives Challenge America grants for three years in a row is not eligible to apply to the category for the following one-year period. Therefore, an organization that has received grants in FY 2015, 2016, and 2017 may **not** apply under these FY 2018 guidelines. That organization may apply for FY 2018 support under other Arts Endowment funding opportunities including Art Works. The organization would be able to apply to the Challenge America category again in FY 2019.

Projects

This category supports focused, distinct projects that take place over limited periods of time and involve limited geographic areas. Such projects generally are smaller in scale and shorter in duration than those in the Art Works category.

All projects must extend the reach of the arts to populations that have limited access to the arts due to geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. The involvement of experienced artists and arts professionals is essential. Each applicant must present a straightforward project that reflects **only one of the three project types below**. Grants are available **only** for:

- **Guest Artist project type, which refers to an arts event or events that will feature one or more guest artists. Guest Artist** is currently the most common Challenge America project type. The guest artist is engaged specifically for the proposed project, and is not considered a resident artist, regular company member, or individual currently serving on the artistic staff of the applicant organization.

  Guest artist(s) should reflect the artistic disciplines of the National Endowment for the Arts, which may include musicians, composers, conductors, actors, directors, dancers, choreographers, curators, visual artists, writers, or media artists. The intention of the Guest Artist project type is to provide National Endowment for the Arts support to the applicant organization and its community to engage with an artist(s) and present a public event that might otherwise not be accessible to audiences that have historically been underserved.

  Allowable guest artist event activities are broad, and may include a festival; exhibition; literary reading; musical, theatrical, or multi-media performance; media screening; broadcast; or lecture. The event(s) may take place in an arts venue or a non-traditional arts venue, but it must be in a location that is accessible to the public. In addition to guest artist fees, there can be a range of other costs and activities associated with the project, including public relations, professional documentation, and program enhancements that are integral to the event. Examples of program enhancements include interpretive material, transportation, program accommodations (e.g., sign language interpretation, audio description, Braille, tactile exhibit tours), catalogues, brochures, or publications. Other enhancements such as specific lecture-demonstrations, pre- or post-event talks, or workshops relevant to the proposed arts event are also eligible.

  The guest artist's role in the required, culminating public event should be clearly described within the application narrative, including the schedule of activities.

  NOTE: Projects that involve curriculum-based arts instruction are not eligible. (See Arts Education in the Art Works category.) Non curriculum-based classes and workshops are eligible expenses but must culminate in a public event with involvement by the participating guest artist.

- **Cultural Tourism, specifically the unified promotion of community-wide arts activities and/or the development of cultural tourism products** to enhance public engagement with arts and culture in communities and in cultural districts (including the marketing and promotion of arts and culture to populations that have been historically underserved). NOTE: Promotional projects for a single organization are not eligible. Unified promotion is defined as the professional assessment, design, and/or distribution of public relations and marketing tools (calendars, websites, radio and television, brochures, rack cards, signage, etc.) designed to benefit several local organizations in a community.

- **The development of professionally directed public art projects.** Although many kinds of arts projects take place in the public realm, for the Challenge America category, the Public Art project type is intended to support primarily **visual arts projects, which may be temporary or permanent,** such as murals, sculptures, multi-media, or environmental art, developed **through a meaningful community engagement process.** Evidence of community involvement should be apparent in the planning, design, or fabrication of the work, and should include a professional lead artist.

  NOTE: The following are not eligible for support: Conservation, restoration, or repair of existing public art; or the development of a public art master plan. These activities may be supported in the Art Works category.

  Please note that these activities may require applicants to provide information in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act. See here for more information LINK. 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.**

Deadline

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	**April 13, 2017** *Register/renew by at least March 22* *Submit by at least April 4*
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	**April 27, 2017 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 4, 2017**
Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance	**January 1, 2018**

If your organization applies to the Challenge America category, it may not submit another application to the Art Works category**,** except for a Creativity Connects project. See "Applicant Eligibility/Application Limits" for further information.

Contact

Challenge America Specialists: challengeamerica@arts.gov or 202/682-5700

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CHALLENGE AMERICA: Application Calendar

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	**April 13, 2017** *Register/renew by at least March 22* *Submit by at least April 4*
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Earliest Announcement of Grant Award or Rejection	December 2017
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Applicants are required to use Grants.gov. See "**How to Prepare and Submit an Application**" for further information.

An organization may submit only one application to either **Art Works** or Challenge America (see "**Application Limits**" for the one exception to this rule).

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 NEA Chairman may adjust application deadlines for affected applicants. If a deadline is extended for any reason, an announcement will be posted on our website.

Please do not seek information on the status of your application before the announcement date that is listed above.

If you have questions:

Email: challengeamerica@arts.gov

Call: 202/682-5700

202/682-5496 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 Arts Endowment's Accessibility Office at 202/682-5532 for help in acquiring an audio recording of these guidelines.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: We Do Not Fund

We Do Not Fund

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

- 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, exhibition of works, or other projects by the applicant organization's 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.
- Activities that occur over an extended period (e.g., projects that span a full season, long-term residencies, most large-scale projects).
- Competitions other than design competitions.
- Projects that involve curriculum-based instruction in the arts.
- Subgranting or regranting.
- The same organization (parent or component) for more than three consecutive years, even if for different projects.
- 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.
- Costs incurred before the beginning or after the completion of the official period of performance.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Applicant Eligibility

Nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; or federally recognized tribal communities or tribes may apply. Applicants may be arts organizations, local arts agencies, arts service organizations, local education agencies (school districts), and other organizations that can help advance the goals of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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. (All organizations must apply directly on their own behalf. Applications through a fiscal agent are not allowed. **See more information on fiscal sponsors**.)
- 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 grant(s) previously received.

An organization whose primary purpose is to channel resources (financial, human, or other) to an affiliated organization is not eligible to apply if the affiliated organization submits its own application. This prohibition applies even if each organization has its own 501(c)(3) status. For example, the "Friends of ABC Museum" may not apply if the ABC Museum applies.

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.

See "How to Prepare and Submit an Application" for the documentation that is required to demonstrate eligibility.

The designated state and jurisdictional arts agencies (SAAs) and their regional arts organizations (RAOs) are not eligible to apply under the Challenge America guidelines. **SAAs and RAOs** may serve as partners in projects. However, they may not receive NEA funds (except as provided through their designated grant programs), and SAA/RAO costs may not be included as part of the required match. SAAs and RAOs are eligible to apply through the Partnership Agreements guidelines.

Ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

LINK TO FISCAL SPONSOR INFO.:

Fiscal Sponsorship

We do not fund unincorporated or for-profit entities or individuals that engage nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)3 U.S. organizations; units of state or local government; or federally recognized tribal communities or tribes to apply for grants on their behalf. An ineligible organization (i.e., one without its own nonprofit status) may not use a fiscal sponsor for the purpose of submitting an application.

What is a fiscal sponsor?

A fiscal sponsor is an entity that oversees the fiscal activities of another organization, company, or group of independent artists or projects. These activities may include bookkeeping, filing of W2s or 1099s, daily banking, or grant preparation.

The key to avoiding the appearance of fiscal sponsorship is the involvement of your organization. This might include

- Producing or co-producing.
- Partnering on creative direction or development.
- Organizing workshops, public showings, or distribution of work.
- Providing social networking strategies or web implementation.

You can provide evidence of your organization's involvement in your application, on your website, though announcements and evaluations of public events, and with archival documentation.

We may review your website and other materials in addition to your application to determine the appropriate nature of the project.

If your organization does not have its own nonprofit status, you may still participate in a project submitted by another organization that meets our eligibility criteria.

While an organization that serves as a fiscal sponsor may not apply for projects on behalf of the entities or individuals that it may sponsor as part of its mission and programs, it may apply for its own programs and productions. In this case, the organization must clearly demonstrate that it is applying only for its own programmatic activities.

Application Limits

For this category, exceptions to the one-application rule are made only for parent organizations that have separately identifiable and independent components; this includes city or county governments.

A parent organization that comprises separately identifiable and independent components (e.g., a university campus that has a presenting organization and a radio station) may submit an application for each such component. In addition, a parent organization also may submit one application on its own behalf for a **distinctly different project**. The parent organization must meet the eligibility requirements for all applicants. NOTE: A related organization that performs grant administration duties for a parent organization (e.g., a college foundation that administers grants awarded to a college and its components) may submit applications for components and the parent organization in lieu of such applications being submitted by the parent. The related organization must meet the eligibility requirements for all applicants.

An independent component must be a unit that is both programmatically and administratively distinct from the parent organization, have its own staff and budget, and generally have an independent board that has substantial responsibility for oversight and management. To qualify as independent, a component should be equivalent to a stand-alone institution with a separate mission.

The following **do not qualify** as independent components:

- Academic departments of colleges and universities.
- Programs and projects of organizations.

For example:

- An art museum on a university campus serves the general public and does not grant degrees. The museum board, not the university trustees, manages the museum's budget, staff, and programming. In this example, the art museum essentially is a stand-alone organization and qualifies as an independent component.
- A symphony association sponsors a youth orchestra in addition to its professional orchestra. Some symphony musicians serve as faculty for the youth orchestra; there is

some overlap of membership between the symphony trustees and the youth orchestra's advisory board; and the executive director for the symphony association serves as CEO for both the professional and youth orchestras. In this case, while the youth orchestra may be an important program of the symphony association, it is not equivalent to a separate institution and therefore does not qualify as an independent component.

A parent organization should consult with our staff to verify the eligibility of its component before preparing an application.

If an organization applies to the Challenge America category, it may not submit another application to the Art Works category except for a Creativity Connects project.

You may apply to other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities, including Our Town, in addition to Challenge America. In each case, the request must be for a **distinctly different project.**

An organization that has received Challenge America grants in FY 2015, 2016, and 2017 may **not** apply for a Challenge America grant under these FY 2018 guidelines. That organization may apply for FY 2018 support under other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities including Art Works.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Award Information

Grant Amounts & Matching Funds

All grants require a nonfederal match of at least 1 to 1. For example, if an organization receives a $10,000 grant, the total eligible project costs must be at least $20,000 and the organization must provide at least $10,000 toward the project from nonfederal sources.

All grants are for $10,000.

Period of Performance

Our support of a project can start no sooner than the "Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance" listed on the **Application Calendar**.

Grants awarded under these guidelines generally may cover a period of performance of up to two years. **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**.

Challenge America grants generally are smaller in scope and shorter in duration than other projects supported under these guidelines. It is anticipated that most projects -- including planning and close-out time -- will be substantially shorter.

Any planning costs that are included as part of the project must be incurred during the established period of performance. No pre-award costs are allowable in the Project Budget. Project costs that are incurred before the "Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance" will be removed from the Project Budget.

A grantee may not receive more than one National Endowment for the Arts grant for the same project during the same period of performance.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Application Review

Review Criteria

Applications will be reviewed on the basis of the following criteria:

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

- Quality of the artists, arts organizations, works of art, or technical services that the project will involve, as appropriate.

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

- Potential of the project to reach underserved populations -- those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability.
- Appropriateness of the proposed performance measurements.
- Potential to make quality arts or cultural resources more widely available.
- Appropriateness of the project to the organization's mission, audience, community, and/or constituency.
- Ability to carry out the project based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, the quality and clarity of the project goals and design, the resources involved, and the qualifications of the project's personnel.

What Happens to Your Application

Applications are evaluated according to the "Review Criteria." After initial staff processing, applications are reviewed by a diverse group of arts experts and other individuals with broad knowledge of the specific types of projects in this funding area. Following further staff review, these recommendations are forwarded to the National Endowment for the Arts Chairman.

The Chairman reviews the recommendations for grants in all funding categories and makes the final decision on all grant awards. Applicants are then notified of funding decisions.

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.

After notification, applicants with questions may contact the staff. **Any applicant whose request has not been recommended may ask for an explanation of the basis for denial. In such instances, the National Endowment for the Arts must be contacted no later than 30 calendar days after the official notification.**

See the "**Application Calendar**" for information on when we expect to announce grant awards and rejections, and the earliest dates by which projects may begin.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Award Administration

Award Notices

The "Earliest Announcement of Grant Award or Rejection" date for your category on the Application Calendar tells you when we expect to announce grant decisions.

Note that "announcement" is likely to take the form of a preliminary congratulatory message, 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 additional information is needed for your project, the number of awards to be processed, whether the agency has its appropriation from Congress, etc.

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

If you are recommended for a grant, 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**.**

Some of the common project types that garner a review are:
- A project involving or occurring near a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object that is 50 years old and therefore eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
- The commissioning and installation of temporary or permanent outdoor furnishings such as benches or market structures or art such as a sculpture or mural.
- An arts festival in a park.
- Design planning and services for projects that may involve a historic site, structure, or district.

This review and approval process may take up to several months to complete and may delay your project's start date and 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 applicants would get to if they click on the link:

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- The commissioning and installation of temporary or permanent outdoor furnishings such as benches or market structures or art such as a sculpture or mural.
- An arts festival in a park.
- Design planning and services for projects that may involve a historic site, structure, or district.

Based on your responses to the questions below, the National Endowment for the Arts will determine one of the following outcomes:

1. There are no anticipated adverse effects on historic properties or resources;
2. Based on an agreement that the NEA has with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), one or more approved exemptions can be applied to the project, confirming that there are no anticipated adverse effects on historic properties or resources; or
3. The project has the potential to have adverse effects on historic properties or resources. You are asked to contact and work directly with your State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and potentially initiate a Section 106 Review.

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.

Provide responses for <u>every</u> project location. Include maps and photographs of each location and property.

1. Provide a very clear description of the district, building, site, landscape, structure, or object in which you will be working, including the address(es). If you don't have a physical address, provide the block or other area of potential effect. Describe the nature of your site, whether activities will take place in public space, streets, vacant lots, historic structures, etc. Include a map.

2. Describe your project activities, including whether the planned activities are temporary or permanent. 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. If your project will physically alter a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object, or if you are working on a plan or design for such a site, describe. For example, if you are commissioning permanent public art, murals, or the design of a permanent structure, your project has the potential to have an adverse effect on environmental or historic resources under NEPA/NHPA.

3. For the purposes of questions (a)-(i) below, a National Historic Register Place (NHRP) includes any district, site, building, structure, landscape or object that is included or eligible for inclusion on the NHRP, whether individually or as a contributing element. Generally, NHRP Sites will include:

   (1) any place 50 years old or older,
   (2) any place included or eligible for inclusion in the NHRP, or
   (3) located in a historic district.

   Additionally, understand that for a project to be temporary it must be 100% reversible.

   a. Does your project involve a festival/public event of limited size or duration? If so, will there be any permanent effects on a NHRP Site(s) or any structures/installations erected or installed on an NHRP Site(s)?
   b. Does your project involve outdoor murals or other art on a NHRP Site(s) or adjacent to a NHRP Site(s)?
   c. 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 NHRP Site(s)?
   d. Does your project involve erecting or placing permanent wayfinding signs (e.g., artistic directional signs) adjacent to or on a NHRP Site(s)?
   e. Does your project involve installing small structures (e.g., benches, bus shelters, produce stands) attached to or dependent on a NHRP Site(s)? If so, describe the ground disturbance necessary for such an installation.
   f. Does your project involve landscape maintenance or rehabilitation (e.g., community garden, urban park) on a NHRP Site(s)? If so, where? Will it include the addition of new large scale landscape elements?
   g. Does your project involve in-kind replacements or repairs?
   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)?

4. If you are proposing a temporary or permanent public art project, or you are designing or planning a district, building, site, landscape, structure or object, you must provide us with the following detailed information: 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.

5. 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.

6. If an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization might attach religious and/or cultural significance to historic properties touched by your project, describe.

We may contact you for additional documentation.

Accessibility

Federal regulations require that all NEA-funded projects be accessible to people with disabilities. Funded activities must be held in an accessible venue and program access and effective communication must be provided for participants and audience members with disabilities. If your project is recommended for funding, you will be asked to provide information describing how you will make your project physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities:

o   Buildings and facilities (including projects held in historic facilities), should be physically accessible. This includes, but is not limited to: ground-level entry, ramped access, and/or elevators to the venue; integrated and dispersed wheelchair seating in assembly areas; wheelchair-accessible box office, stage, and dressing rooms; wheelchair-accessible display cases, exhibit areas, and counters; and wheelchair-accessible restrooms and water fountains.

o   The programmatic offering should be accessible either as part of the funded activity or upon request, where relevant. This can include, but is not limited to: contact information for requesting accommodations; electronic materials and websites; print materials in alternative formats, such as large-print brochures/labels, Braille, and electronic/digital formats; accommodations for performance, tours, and lectures, such as audio description, tactile opportunities, sign language interpretation, and real-time captioning; closed/open captioning of video and film; and assistive listening devices.

Please see the [Nondiscrimination Statutes](#) in our "Assurance of Compliance" for additional

information. For technical assistance on how to make your project fully accessible, contact the Accessibility Office at accessibility@arts.gov, 202/682-5532 Voice or the Civil Rights Office at 202/682-5454 or 202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y., or see our online Accessibility Resources.

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.

All Challenge America grants will be assigned the agency's Engagement objective. Before applying, please review the **Standard** reporting requirements for the agency's Engagement objective. If you have any questions about the agency's Engagement objective or the associated reporting requirements that may be required if you receive a grant, contact the staff before applying.

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.

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 NEA 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.

All applicants should carefully review 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.** Failure to do so may result in having a grant terminated and/or returning funds to the NEA, 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 <u>29 C.F.R. Part 505</u>. 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 "<u>Assurance of Compliance</u>"** below.
   - <u>**Debarment and Suspension procedures**</u>. 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** (<u>OMB Circular A-129</u>). 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** (<u>29 C.F.R. pt 505</u>).   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.
   - <u>**The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988**</u> (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 **<u>National Historic Preservation Act</u>** (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 <u>National Environmental Policy Act</u> (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.)

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.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Other Information

Staff Visits

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

Access for Individuals with Disabilities

The Accessibility Office assists applicants in making accessibility an integral part of their planning so that organizations and activities are inclusive for staff, panelists, artists, and audiences. For more information, resources, and technical assistance, contact the Accessibility Office at accessibility@arts.gov, 202/682-5532 Voice, or see the Accessibility section of the website. The Arts Endowment's Office of Civil Rights at 202/682-5454 or 202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y. also provides technical assistance on how to make projects fully accessible.

Civil Rights

The Office of Civil Rights at 202/682-5454 or 202/682-5082 Voice/T.T.Y. is available to investigate complaints about compliance with accessibility standards as well as other federal

civil rights statutes. For inquiries about limited English proficiency, go to http://www.lep.gov, the FOIA Reading Room, or contact the Office of General Counsel at ogc@arts.gov or 202/682-5418.

Standards for Service

We have 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 are meeting these standards. Please email: webmgr@arts.gov, attention: Standards for Service. For questions about these guidelines or your application, see "Agency Contacts." 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 8.5 hours per response for Challenge America. This includes 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.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: How to Prepare and Submit an Application

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.

Challenge America Application Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	April 13, 2017 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time

	Register/renew by at least March 22 *Submit by at least April 4*
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	**April 27, 2107 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 4, 2017**

1. View the Challenge America Guidelines Webinar:
   - We will conduct a live webinar on March TBD, 2017, at 3 p.m. Eastern Time featuring an overview presentation 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. Ensure that your application is complete with this checklist:
   - Challenge America Application Checklist

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

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

Challenge America Application Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	**April 13, 2017 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time**
	Register/renew by at least March 22
	Submit by at least April 4
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	**April 27, 2017 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 4, 2017**

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.
- Registration can take several weeks. 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 March 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. Please see important information about versions of Adobe Reader DC here.
- Access the SF-424 on Grants.gov by clicking on the link below:

DOWNLOAD

[Funding Opportunity Number 2017NEA01CA]

This will bring you to the "View Grant Opportunity" screen on Gtrants.gov. Choose "Select Package" and follow the screens from there. Do not open a Grants.gov "Workspace" environment to create, prepare, or submit your application materials. 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.

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: 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 **January 1, 2018** or any time after. While a period of performance of up to two years is allowed, we anticipate that most Challenge America projects -- including planning and closeout time -- will be substantially shorter. 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**.
- If you wait until the day of the deadline to submit your SF-424 you are taking a significant risk! We strongly suggest that you submit your SF-424 no later than April 4, 2017. This should provide ample time to resolve any problems you might encounter.
- 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 April 4, 2017 or earlier 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.
- To access NEA-GO, you'll need your Agency Tracking Number/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 April 3, 2017. The number is not available before that date.

Additional Help

For additional help on how to use Grants.gov, please see the Grants.gov website at **Support**. You also may send an 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.

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Step 2: Submit Materials to NEA-GO

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.

Challenge America Application Deadline:

Step 1 - Submit SF-424 to Grants.gov	**April 13, 2017 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time**
	Register/renew by at least March 22
	Submit by at least April 4
Step 2 - Submit Materials to NEA-GO	**April 27, 2017 to 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time on May 4, 2017**

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: "18-123456")**
• **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 April 3, 2017. The number is not available before that 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 discipline staff that is appropriate to your project** (see "**Agency Contacts**").

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

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. For your application to be considered complete, every item that is required MUST be included in your application.

Challenge America FY18 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.

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 (take a screenshot and/or keep the email). 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.

CHALLENGE AMERICA
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

BEFORE APPLYING (By at least March 22)
☐ Register/Renew with the System for Awards Management
☐ Register/Renew with Grants.gov
Why do I need to register/renew so far in advance of the application deadline? See here LINK.

STEP 1:GRANTS.GOV (By at least April 4 for the April 13 application deadline)
☐ Submit the SF-424 (Application for Federal Domestic Assistance) through Grants.gov
Why do I need to submit the SF-424 in advance of the application deadline? See here LINK.

STEP 2: NEA GRANTS ONLINE™ (NEA-GO)
☐ Log in to Grants.gov and go to "Check My Application Status" to get your Grants.gov tracking number and agency tracking number to use as your username and password for NEA-GO. NEA-GO will be open April 27-May 4, 2017.
☐ Complete & submit the Grant Application Form (GAF) by 11:59 pm ET on May 4, 2017.
☐ Part 1: Organizational Information
☐ Part 2: Project Information
☐ Part 3: Project Budget
☐ Part 4: Items to Upload -- Required Work Samples (Excess pages and items not listed in the guidelines will be deleted.)

WORK SAMPLES
☐ Video
☐ Audio
☐ Digital Images
☐ Documents
☐ Websites

☐ Part 5: Organization & Project Profile

RESOURCES
☐ Watch the Challenge America webinar
☐ Watch the Grant Application Form tutorial
☐ Contact Challenge America staff with any questions

FULL GUIDELINES CAN BE FOUND AT: http://arts.gov/grants-organizations/challenge-america

CHALLENGE AMERICA: Frequently Asked Questions

How can I find out when new guidelines are released?

NEA guidelines are modified every year. Sign up for the notification service provided by Grants.gov, the federal government's online application system.

Sign up here.

The "We Do Not Fund" section says that subgranting is not allowed. What is subgranting?

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. A subgrantee is not directly employed by or affiliated with your organization.

Examples of subgranting include:

- Awards and prizes.
- Payment to an individual or organization to obtain training or technical assistance for their own benefit with little or no involvement from your organization. (Allowable activities would include services that are offered or coordinated by your organization such as making your facilities available, conducting workshops or conferences, or providing hands-on assistance. These activities also should be monitored and evaluated by your organization.)
- Production funds awarded to an individual or organization through a competitive review process with little or no subsequent involvement from your organization.

Most organizations cannot apply to the National Endowment for the Arts to subgrant federal funds to individuals or organizations. Congress has prohibited us from making grants for subgranting activity, with exceptions only for state arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and local arts agencies designated to operate on behalf of local governments. Eligible local arts agencies must have a three-year history of subgranting in the arts in order to apply for a subgranting project.

My organization wants to apply for support of its apprenticeship program. How can I clarify in my application that my project does not include awarding subgrants even though my budget may include fees to individual artists?

The key to avoiding the appearance of subgranting is the involvement of your organization.

'Many types of projects can and should include fees to individual artists. For example, a budget for an apprenticeship program might include fees paid to artists. These fees are not considered subgranting if your organization provides substantive supervision of and involvement in the mentor-apprentice relationship. This might include:

- Planning a detailed description of the individual master-apprentice course of study.
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the activity including conducting site visits.

- Documenting apprenticeship activities including reports from masters and apprentices.
- Arranging public exhibition or performance opportunities for masters and apprentices.
- Archiving material related to the apprenticeships and publicly distributing information about the apprenticeship program and its activities.

Note that simply "checking in" on the activity, including obtaining progress and final reports, does not qualify as substantive involvement in the project.

You can provide evidence of your organization's involvement with this activity through project-related information on your website, announcements and evaluations of public events, and archival documentation.

PROJECTS

Does my project have to be new? Does it have to be big?

No.

Projects do not have to be new. Excellent existing projects can be just as competitive as new activities. Projects do not need to be big either; we welcome small projects that can make a difference in their community or field.

Does my project have to be outside the scope of my regular programming?

No, a project can be a part of an applicant's regular season or activity. For example, a performance by a guest artist that is part of a concert hall's regular season could constitute an acceptable project. Other projects might be a workshop production of a work in progress or a charrette sponsored by a community design center. What is important is the specificity of the activities involved. Also, there can be no overlap with projects for which you are receiving other National Endowment for the Arts or federal funds.

Can I apply for MORE National Endowment for the Arts funding for a project supported by an earlier grant?

Yes. If you have previously received a grant to support an earlier phase of a project (for example, for research for a documentary, or early development work on a new play or choreographed work) you may re-apply to the NEA for additional funding to support a later phase (for example, the post-production/editing/distribution phase of the documentary, or the final development/premiere of the new play or dance). However, each application must clearly describe the specific phase of work to be supported, and there can be NO overlapping project costs between the awards.

Can my partner organizations also apply for NEA funds to support our collaborative work?

A partnering organization may apply for funds to support a joint effort but there can be NO OVERLAPPING PROJECT COSTS between the applications. For example, if you are a dance

company, and you are applying for the development of a new work and a presenting organization/theater is also applying for a residency/performance project that includes your company and the presentation of the new work, you must ensure that the costs are kept separate. You cannot include travel costs in your budget if these same costs are also reflected in the presenter's budget. You cannot include as match any income that is derived from a federal grant made to another entity (e.g., if a presenter includes your artist fees as an expense in their budget, you cannot use that as income in your own budget). In short, you should communicate closely with your partners to be sure that you are each clear on the division of costs and activity between the applications.

Will you contact me if my application is missing anything?

No. Because of the volume of applications, we have a strict approach to incomplete applications. For your application to be considered complete, every item that is required MUST be included in your application package, which must be submitted no later than the application deadline date under which you are applying. Staff will not contact applicants to request missing material. Please don't let that happen. Use the "What makes a complete application" section for your category to make sure that you have included every item. Have the completeness and accuracy of your application package double-checked by a responsible staff member who understands the importance of this task. Allow at least six weeks to prepare your application, the work samples, and other supplementary information. And do not wait until the day of the deadline to submit!

If my application is determined to be incomplete, may I add the missing item(s) and resubmit the application?

No. The staff has to check thousands of applications. By the time that an application is identified as incomplete, it will likely be several weeks after the application deadline. An organization cannot add missing items and resubmit the application after the application deadline. We encourage you to double-check your application package against the "What makes a complete application" section to make sure that nothing is missing.

We are unable to accept any new or updated information after the application deadline.

Can I get a sample application?

Yes. Please see the [FOIA Reading Room, Frequently Requested Records](#) for information on what is available as sample application material and how to request it.

How soon after the "Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance" for my deadline does my project have to begin?

The National Endowment for the Arts' support can start any time on or after that date.

Can my project start before this date?

No. Proposed project activities for which you're requesting support cannot take place before this date. Ask the National Endowment for the Arts to fund only the portion of your project that will take place after the "Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance." If you include project costs that are incurred before the "Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance" in your Project Budget, they will be removed.

How long can my project last? May I apply for another project during this period?

We generally allow a period of performance of up to two years. Challenge America grants generally are smaller in scope and shorter in duration than other projects. It is anticipated that most projects -- including planning and close-out time -- will be substantially shorter.

If you get close to the end of your grant period and think you need more time, you may request an extension, but approval is not guaranteed.

As long as it meets all other eligibility requirements, an organization may apply for another project (with totally different project costs) the following year even if a National Endowment for the Arts-supported project is still underway. Note that if you do receive an extension on a previous year's project, it may affect your grant period for your new proposed project.

If my application is rejected, can I find out why?

After notification, applicants who have questions may contact the staff responsible for handling their application. Any applicant whose request has not been recommended may ask for an explanation of the basis for rejection. In such instances, the National Endowment for the Arts must be contacted no later than 30 days after the official notification.