

Supporting Statement A: Arts Basic Survey

Introduction

This request is for clearance to conduct the 2025 Arts Basic Survey (ABS) (formally titled Annual Arts Benchmarking Survey, and Annual Arts Basic Survey). This survey will be conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau as a supplement to the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Current Population Survey. The ABS will be conducted in February 2025 and serves as a supplement when the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is not conducted. To date, the ABS was conducted six times from 2013 to 2020. One of the strengths of the ABS is that it will complement and supplement the information collected in the SPPA. The SPPA is the field's premiere repeated cross-sectional survey of individual attendance and involvement in arts and cultural activities, and is conducted approximately every five years. The ABS is much shorter than the SPPA, consisting of 12 to 14 questions per module that will be used to track arts participation over time.

As with the SPPA, the ABS data will be circulated to interested researchers and will be the basis for a range of NEA reports and independent research publications. Reports on these data will be made publicly available on the NEA's website¹ or NEA-designated websites. The ABS will provide primary knowledge on the extent and nature of participation in the arts in the United States.

A. Justification

A.1. Necessity of Information Collection

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

As a national survey, the ABS will serve as a sound basis on which to make regular estimates of participation rates in the various art forms asked on the survey. National data from the ABS, along with the SPPA, has appeared regularly in the Social Indicators chapter of the Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States Government. The ABS data will also provide information on the characteristics of the population participating in the arts. In addition, the ABS gathers information on the characteristics of adults who do not participate in the arts. The ABS will provide trend data that will help policymakers and arts administrators make decisions using reliable and recent information.

A.2. Needs and Uses of the Data

The ABS will provide measures of participation in the arts from a nationally representative sample of adults ages 18 and older. The information to be collected from adults include attendance at live arts events, participation in the arts through performing or creating art, reading, and art museums or galleries. Since access to the arts is a major Agency goal, measuring the wide range of possible ways the American public can participate in the arts is of critical importance.

¹ <https://arts.gov/artistic-fields/research>

The sample design is such that, in addition to the capability of making national estimates, it will be possible to generate estimates for subregions of the nation and for approximately 32 individual states and 11 large metropolitan areas. Thus, policymakers and arts administrators at the national, regional, state, and local levels will be able to study the patterns of participation across various population subgroups and to look for correlates of participation in artistic and other cultural activities. The data from this study will better enable arts administrators to make essential policy decisions based on such things as the size and characteristics of current audiences. Publications based on this data will be available to the public on the NEA's website or NEA-designated websites, where studies on the SPPA data can also be found.² This includes the Agency's National Arts Statistics and Evidence-based Reporting Center.³

The ABS is a study that complements the ongoing assessment of the arts activities that began with the 1982 SPPA and was followed with the 1985, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2008, 2012, 2017, and 2022 SPPA surveys. The first six years of the ABS were conducted in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2020. Previously, odd years focused on arts attendance and arts learning, and even years focused on arts creation and performance. These data allow arts administrators to assess how the demand for the arts changes over time, and how the nature of adults' participation in the arts changes over time.

Data from previous SPPA surveys have been widely used by policymakers and scholars because of their unique scope and statistical precision. The estimates from the ABS will help users of SPPA data assess whether changes in the SPPA participation estimates are more likely a short-term phenomenon (based, for instance, on the economy or a major current event) or a long-term shift in participation. This is particularly crucial as the most recent 2022 SPPA reflected substantial shifts due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

A.3. Use of Information Technology

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

A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

Preexisting surveys, such as the General Social Survey (sponsored by the National Science Foundation), periodically include a handful of arts participation questions. However, there is no existing nationally representative survey outside of the ABS and SPPA that allows for tracking of public participation in the arts on a regular basis and for analysis by demographic and geographic subgroups.

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

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

A.6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

The goal of NEA is to conduct the ABS at least once between years that the SPPA is conducted in order to enable policymakers and arts administrators to make decisions using reliable and recent information.

² <https://arts.gov/artistic-fields/research>

³ <https://www.arts.gov/impact/research/NASERC>

A.7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances that apply to the ABS.

A.8. Public Comment and Consultations Outside the Agency

A notice was published in the Federal Register (Document #2024-14996) on July 9, 2024 to solicit comments on the benchmarking survey prior to submission of this OMB clearance request. (A copy of this notice is in Attachment B.) The second Federal Register Notice was published on September 16, 2024 (Document #2024-20996). (A copy of this notice is in Attachment C.)

The ABS questions are essentially from the SPPA questionnaire and were selected by a team internal to the NEA. The SPPA questionnaire was developed by extensive advisory panels of academicians and users of national arts data. The ABS survey instruments are included in the appendix (Attachment D). Half of the respondents will receive Form 1, which includes questions on arts creation, performance, and learning, and the other half will receive Form 2, which includes questions on arts attendance.

A.9. Paying Respondents

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

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect the supplement data in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the OMB Circular A-130. Each sample household receives an advance letter approximately one week before the start of the initial CPS interview (see Attachment E). The letter includes the information required by the Privacy Act of 1974, explains the voluntary nature of the survey, and states the estimated time required for participating in the survey. Interviewers must ask if the respondent received the letter and, if not, provide a copy and allow the respondent sufficient time to read the contents. Also, interviewers provide households with the pamphlet The U.S. Census Bureau Respects Your Privacy and Protects Your Personal Information (Attachment F) and Fact Sheet for the Current Population Survey (Attachment G), which further states the confidentiality assurances associated with this data collection effort and the U.S. Census Bureau's past performance in assuring confidentiality).

All information given by respondents to U.S. Census Bureau employees is held in strict confidence under Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 (see Attachment A). Every U.S. Census Bureau employee has taken an oath to that effect and is subject to a jail penalty and/or substantial fine if they disclose any information given to them.

A.11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

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

A.12. Estimate of Hour Burden

The estimated respondent burden is 1,000 hours. Due to the methodology requirements for the supplement questions, approximately 24,000 persons are actually interviewed for the supplement. With each person interview, on average, being two and a half minutes long, this amounts to an hour burden of 1,000 hours for these questions.

The estimated total annual respondent cost burden based on these hours is \$31,380. For individuals, the wage rate is \$31.38 per hour based on hourly earnings for employees as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

12A. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours

Type of Respondent	Expected Number of Respondents[1]	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response (in hours)	Total Burden Hours
CPS Household Respondent	24,000	1	.04167	1,000

12B. Estimated Annualized Burden Costs

Type of Respondent	Total Burden Hours	Hourly Wage Rate	Total Respondent Costs (rounded to nearest dollar)
Household Respondent	1,000	\$31.38	\$31,380
Total	1,000		\$31,380

A.13. Estimate of Cost Burden

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

A.14. Cost to Federal Government

The estimated cost to the government of the supplement on public participation in the arts is \$390,000 in FY 2024, which will be borne by the NEA. The estimated cost to the government is expected to be \$93 million in FY 2024 for the full CPS data collection program. Those costs are borne by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other government agencies.

A.15. Reasons for Program Changes

This information collection does not represent any program change.

A.16. Project Schedule

Previous ABS instruments from FY 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2020 serve as the basis for the 2025 survey. The finalized survey modules and instructions were delivered to the U.S. Census Bureau in September 2024. Main data collection for the ABS is expected to occur in February of 2025, as a supplement to the February 2025 CPS. Processing of this supplement will begin following data collection. The public use files as well as summary reports are expected to be released in the following year after data collection.

A.17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

The NEA does not wish to display the assigned expiration date of the information collection. The CPS requires two OMB control numbers and two expiration dates because the survey consists of two parts: the basic questionnaire and a supplemental questionnaire, which differ from month to month. The OMB control number and expiration date for conducting the Basic CPS are included in the survey's advance letter (Attachment E). To avoid confusion, the expiration date of the supplemental questionnaire is not included in the letter.

A.18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification.