

**The National Endowment for the Arts
Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network
Community Engagement Program Evaluation
OMB Information Collection Request - New Collection
Justification – Part A Supporting Statement**

Last updated: June 9, 2025

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Part A. Justification

Executive Summary

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Office of Research and Analysis (ORA) requests information collection for an independent mixed-methods evaluation of the Creative Forces®:

NEA Military Healing Arts Network (Creative Forces) Community Engagement Grant Program.¹

This is a new Information Collection Request, requesting approval for data collection for two grantee cohorts (FY2026 and FY 2027) between July 2025 and July 2027. The data to be collected are available only through this information collection and not available elsewhere.

The purpose of the evaluation of the Creative Forces Community Engagement (CFCE) Grant Program is to assess program implementation, document the effect of the program on participants and grantees, and identify best and promising practices for CFCE and other community arts engagement programs for military-connected populations.² Evaluation results will provide actionable evidence to support current and future iterations of the grant program and CFCE grantees. The data collected in the study are not intended to be generalized to a broader population.

A1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

Creative Forces is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the U.S.

¹ NEA and M-AAA Creative Forces Community Network information pages:

<https://www.arts.gov/initiatives/creative-forces/creative-forces-community-network>; <https://www.maaa.org/for-organizations/creative-forces/>

² Creative Forces broadly defines the military-connected population as including active-duty service members, guardsmen, reservists, veterans, military and veteran families, as well as caregivers and healthcare workers providing care for military service members and veterans.

Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs that seeks to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military and veteran populations exposed to trauma, as well as their families and caregivers, through clinical and community arts engagement programs.³ Since 2017, Creative Forces has invested in community arts engagement projects in order to advance understanding of the benefits and impacts for military-connected populations who have been exposed to trauma. Having announced the CFCE program in 2020, Creative Forces began awarding Community Engagement Grants in partnership with the Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) in 2022 to support community-based arts programs and activities and expand the reach of Creative Forces nationwide. Since then, more than 100 CFCE grants, ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000 in matched funding, have been awarded to eligible organizations nationwide.⁴ This is a request for clearance for the NEA to conduct an independent mixed-methods evaluation of the CFCE Grant Program from July 2025 through July 2027, involving two cohorts of grantees.

Creative Forces is funded through Congressional appropriation. The Congressional Committee on Appropriation “supports the NEA’s continued efforts to expand upon this successful program to embed Creative Arts Therapies at the core of integrative care efforts in clinical settings, advance collaboration among clinical and community arts providers to support wellness and reintegration efforts for affected families, and advance research to improve our understanding of impacts of these interventions in both clinical and community settings.”⁵

³NEA Creative Forces information page: <https://www.arts.gov/initiatives/creative-forces>

⁴ <https://www.creativeforcesnrc.arts.gov/programs/community-engagement/>

⁵ S. Rept. 115-276 - DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2019. *Congress.gov*, Library of Congress, 16 November 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/115th-congress/senate-report/276>.

Creative Forces is a key element for meeting the NEA's *FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan*,⁶ **Strategic Objective 2.1: Support Arts Projects with a Focus on Advancing the Health and Well-Being of Individuals**. As noted in this strategic objective, the CFCE Grant Program:

"... aims to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military-connected populations... The lessons learned from implementing Creative Forces will inform other strategies to advance individual health and well-being through the arts. The networking, technical assistance, and the evaluation and learning that occur across the Creative Forces program are typical of the field-building activities necessary to realize this strategic objective for broader population groups. At the federal level, the NEA models this knowledge transfer by leading the Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development, which meets quarterly to examine research projects and evidence-based practice at the intersection of the arts, health, and human development."⁷

Creative Forces also supports **Strategic Objective 1.1 Expand Public Access to the NEA's Programs and Award-Supported Activities through** cross-agency collaborations⁸ with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, as well as state and local arts agencies.

⁶ [NEA Strategic Plan: FY2022-2026](https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-2026-Strategic-Plan-Feb2022.pdf): <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-2026-Strategic-Plan-Feb2022.pdf>.

⁷ [NEA Strategic Plan: FY2022-2026](https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-2026-Strategic-Plan-Feb2022.pdf) (see p.22)

⁸ [NEA Strategic Plan: FY2022-2026](https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/2022-2026-Strategic-Plan-Feb2022.pdf) (see p.14)

CFCE grants support non-clinical arts engagement programs taking place in healthcare, community, or virtual settings. These grants support community programs in a range of arts activities, including visual, written, and performing arts offered through single events, drop-in programs, and ongoing engagement led by artists in residence, teaching artists, or creative arts therapists. The grants are also intended to help grantees and partners increase their capacity through networking; building capacity to design, implement, and evaluate programs to meet the needs of participants; and increase understanding of the value and impact of the arts. Projects must: 1) be led by or include a partner organization or individual that has a history of creative/artistic programming; 2) include at least one partner to provide resources that help or support the project; and 3) include the perspective of one or more of the local members of the target military connected groups that the project will serve.⁹

This Information Collection Request is for a two-year period of the CFCE Grant Program, involving two cohorts of grantees. During this period, the NEA anticipates awarding approximately 50 awards annually, with the first round of grant-funded projects taking place after July 1, 2025. The awards are matching grants of \$10,000 to \$50,000 for emerging (“Emerging”) and established (“Advanced”) community-based arts engagement projects to serve military-connected populations. The grant program supports a range of models (e.g.,

During development of the CFCE Grant Program, the NEA commissioned literature reviews and

⁹M-AAA Creative Forces information page: <https://www.maaa.org/for-organizations/creative-forces/>

an evaluation of Creative Forces community engagement pilot programs¹⁰ and convened a working group with subject matter experts. Collectively, these activities 1) documented the needs of military and veteran populations exposed to trauma, and of their families and caregivers, 2) identified goals for community arts engagement programming and four outcomes for participants, 3) produced logic models and measurement frameworks for the grantee and national program levels, 4) contributed to grant guidelines, and 5) evaluated methodologies and instruments for data collection. Attachment A provides the overall logic model for the national grant program, as well as the grantee logic model.

A2. Purpose and use of the information.

Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate how the agency has actually used the information received from the current collection.

Data collected through this Information Collection Request will enable the NEA to conduct an independent, mixed-methods evaluation of the CFCE Grant Program. This evaluation is critical to assessing the program's effectiveness, understanding its impact on military-connected populations, and identifying opportunities to improve program implementation and outcomes. The resulting evidence will inform the NEA's decision-making for program improvements, help ensure it benefits the participants, and maximize the program's public value.

During the planning phase, the evaluator established a Technical Working Group (TWG) to provide feedback on the evaluation plan, implementation, selected deliverables, reporting, and

¹⁰ [Community Connections Project Study Report - Creative Forces National Resource Center:](https://www.creativeforcesnrc.arts.gov/resources/community-connections-report/)
<https://www.creativeforcesnrc.arts.gov/resources/community-connections-report/>

dissemination of funding. The TWG consists of 11 representatives of similar community-based non-profits with arts programs, partners of those organizations, military-connected individuals, organizations that serve military-connected individuals that partner with the arts, participants of CFCE programs, and researchers and evaluators working in this field. Thus far, the TWG has provided detailed feedback on the evaluation plan, the study research design, research questions, and the data collection instruments. Moving forward, they will assist in translating the findings into meaningful recommendations for the study's primary audiences.

The evaluation is guided by research questions that address participant and organizational outcomes, grantee partnerships, technical assistance, and program strategies and practices. The evaluation will produce actionable, evidence-based findings that can be used by the NEA, M-AAA, grantees, and other programs providing community arts engagement for military connected populations. The findings will enable the NEA to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the program through decisions that support efficiency and ensure the program has tangible value for military-connected individuals.

Evaluation Design. The evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. The evaluation will incorporate data from all grantees. This study has been reviewed and approved by Solutions IRB, which determined it meets the ethical standards for research involving human participants (Attachment D). Exhibit 1 provides an overview of the research questions and their associated data sources.

Exhibit 1.

CFCE Evaluation at a Glance	
Research Question	Data Source
1. What participant outcomes are associated with participation in the Creative Forces Community Engagement grant program? <i>Creative expression, social connectedness, resilience, independence and adaptation to civilian life</i>	• Participant pre-post survey, change over time ○ Disaggregation by outcome, participant variables (e.g., service member, veteran) • Interviews with grantees (post) • Interviews with participants (as available during case studies)
2. Which program strategies and partnerships proved most effective in realizing participant outcomes? To what degree are differences in participant outcomes attributable to differences in grantees' strategies or partnerships?	• Participant Survey (pre-post) ○ Disaggregation by outcome, program variables, grantee/partner variables • Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey • Interviews with grantees, M-AAA (post) • Interviews with participants (as available during case studies) • Grantee data (M-AAA) and reports (Application, Interim Report, FDR)
3. What organizational outcomes are associated with participation in the Creative Forces Community Engagement grant program? <i>Networked organization, strengthened capacity, understanding of the value and impact of the arts</i>	• Interviews with grantees, M-AAA (post) • Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey • Grantee data (M-AAA) and reports (Grantee Application Form, Interim Report, Final Descriptive Report)
4. Which technical assistance strategies proved most effective in strengthening organizational practices and outcomes? To what degree are differences in grantee outcomes attributable to differences in technical assistance strategies?	• Technical assistance needs assessment data (M-AAA) • Interviews with grantees, M-AAA (post) • Grantee data (M-AAA) and reports (GAF, Interim Report, FDR)

5. What distinct practices are grantee organizations using to engage military-connected communities? What are the lessons learned from grantees that can be shared with other nonprofit arts organizations seeking to engage military-connected communities?	• Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey • Interviews with grantees, M-AAA (post) • Grantee data (M-AAA) and reports (GAF, Interim Report, FDR)
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Data Sources. To answer the research questions, the evaluation will utilize primary and secondary data sources. Primary data includes surveys and interviews, and secondary sources include grant program data collected by M-AAA, as well as forms and reports completed by grantees. The sources are described below. Information about the data collection process, sampling, and analysis is provided in subsequent sections for each instrument. Participation in evaluation activities is outlined in the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants Application Guidelines. Grantees are required to participate in an interview, and data from their required reporting will be incorporated into the evaluation. Participation in Case Studies is optional, and grantees who are invited to participate may choose to opt in or opt out. Evaluation activities are optional for grantees’ partners, arts engagement facilitators, and program participants, and they will receive a gift card in appreciation for their involvement.

Primary Data Sources

Participant Survey (Attachment B). This pre-post survey assesses the four participant outcomes: creative expression, social connectedness, resilience, and independence and successful adaptation to civilian life. The survey will be completed by participants of CFCE programs where the program model provides a minimum of three sessions or eight hours of engagement. This minimum is required in order for participants to have sufficient exposure to the programming that measurable change may occur, and to allow pre and post administration.

Three formats for administering the survey will be offered (outlined in Supporting Statement B) and each grantee will select the format best suited for their participants. The survey collects identifying information to enable pre-post matching of individual participants' responses. Respondents receive a \$35 eGift card as token of appreciation.

Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey (Attachment B). Within CFCE, an Arts Engagement Facilitator is someone who leads, facilitates, or teaches arts activities or experiences for programs supported by Creative Forces grants. The survey collects information about the key practices and strategies they use, and their effectiveness, in order to guide decisions about the program and training for arts engagement facilitators. Respondents receive a \$35 eGift card as token of appreciation. The survey is designed to be anonymous or confidential, depending on whether the respondent chooses to enter their name and e-mail address at the end of the survey (responses are confidential) or to contact the evaluator separately to submit their name and e-mail address (responses are anonymous).

Interviews with Principal Stakeholders (Attachment B). As part of grant requirements, each grantee will identify a representative of the CFCE program leadership to participate in a virtual, one-hour interview. Each grantee will also be invited to identify a representative of one key partner to participate in a separate virtual 30-minute interview. Case study sites have an additional allotment of four hours for 30-minute, in-person interviews with other grantee staff, program personnel, partners (including arts engagement facilities), and/or participants. Whether virtual or in-person, partner and participant interviewees will receive a \$35 eGift card for a 30-minute interview in appreciation of their participation. In addition, grant program leadership will be interviewed annually.

Case Studies with Site Visits. The evaluation includes eight case studies with in-person site visits for interviews and data collection. Case studies allow this study to go deeper with the evaluation questions, particularly around 1) organizational outcomes related to networks, partnerships and connections with military connected communities; 2) grantees' understanding the needs of military-connected communities and capacity building related to support for military-connected individuals; 3) effective technical assistance; and 4) lessons learned.

The case study will include eight grantees from the FY2026 cohort and will occur between October 2025 and May 2026. A representative sample (with alternates) will be developed in collaboration with the TWG to identify the selection criteria most relevant to the evaluation questions. Variables that may be considered include service delivery model, rural/urban location, region, type of organization and/partners, grant tier, arts discipline, population served, degree of success in meeting goals, etc.

Secondary Data Sources

Grant Program Data. Data collected by M-AAA reflecting implementation of the grant programs (number of applicants, number of awards, amounts of awards, etc.).

Grantee Forms and Reports. Grantees complete three reports¹¹ that provide a range of information about their organizations (e.g., type of organization, mission statement, operating budget), their partners (e.g., role in project), and their CFCE programs (e.g., goals, program, model, participant demographics, budget). The data in these forms and reports will be accessed

¹¹ Grantee Application Form [FY26.CFCEG Application-at-a-Glance.docx](#), including the Supplemental Application Form (OMB Control No. 3135-0140); Interim Report <https://maaa.tfaforms.net/4983188> (OMB Control No. 3135-0140); Final Descriptive Report [\[redacted\]](#) (OMB Control No. 3135-0140). OMB Control No. 3135-0140

to provide descriptive statistics of the grantee cohorts, to identify variables for disaggregation of the Participant Survey results, and to identify variables for consideration in developing the case study sample.

Program-Level Participation Rates and Engagement. Program participation and engagement data, listed below, documents the extent of exposure to the CFCE programming (intervention). If available, this data can be used descriptively and as covariates for participant outcomes analyses. Based on experience with CFCE and similar programs, these data will be available only for some programs. The evaluator will determine if that is the case for this evaluation.

- Total number of participants over time
- Total number of participants per session
- Total hours of engagement possible
- Total hours of engagement per person
- Individual attendance rates

Technical Assistance Data. M-AAA will provide data documenting technical assistance implementation and feedback, such as the topics, schedule, grantee participation rates, and feedback.

A3. Use of information technology and burden reduction.

Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

NEA takes its responsibility to minimize burden on respondents very seriously and has designed this project with that goal in mind. By using web-based surveys, virtual interviews,

and a limited number of site visits for case studies, the NEA has eliminated hundreds of hours of labor that would have been required to administer a paper-based survey and the burden and travel costs associated with in-person interviews for grantees. These virtual methods also increase the number of grantees, arts engagement facilitators, and programs that can contribute to this data collection, efficiently strengthening the data, while reducing overall burden.

A4. Efforts to identify duplication.

Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in item 2 above.

There is no similar data collection that has been conducted or being conducted that duplicates the efforts of the proposed data collection for the CFCE Grant Program. The grant program is relatively new, and this is the first evaluation effort. Furthermore, this grant program uniquely serves military-connected populations through community arts engagement and is the largest national initiative with this focus.

A5. Impacts on small businesses or other small entities.

The study will be conducted primarily with grant recipients of nonprofit organizations. These grantees will likely include smaller organizations. Several strategies will minimize the burden on these organizations. The evaluation will acquire data from required reporting forms that grantees must complete as part of their award terms. Using these secondary data sources minimizes the need for additional data collection and reduces duplication of effort for grantees. The evaluation team will administer the Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey, removing this burden from grantees, and will provide technical assistance for grantees who administer the

Participant Survey to reduce their time and effort. For Case Study Site Visits, the evaluators will assist grantees in arranging the interviews. Based on experience, providing a scheduling template is simple but effective part of this assistance.

A6. Consequences of collecting the information less frequently.

Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing the burden.

This is a one-time collection of information from two grantee cohorts. As this is a one-time study, reducing the frequency is not applicable. Without this data collection, the agency will be limited on their ability to assess the program's effectiveness, refine future funding strategies, and ensure that public resources are being used efficiently to support military-connected communities. There are no known technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

A7. Special circumstances relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.6.

The information will be collected in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6 (Controlling Paperwork Burden on the Public-General Information Collection Guidelines).

There are no special circumstances contrary to these guidelines.

A8. Comments in response to the Federal Register Notice and efforts to consult outside Agency.

On February 28, 2025, a 60-day Federal Register Notice was published at 90 FR 10955 [Vol. 90, No. 39, p. 10955]. No public comments were received in response to the notice.

On June 9, 2025, a 30-day Federal Register Notice was published at 90 FR 24302 [Vol. 9, No. 109, p. 24302].

A9. Explain any decisions to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

The evaluator will offer tokens of appreciation for engagement in voluntary evaluation activities, as noted in Exhibit 2. The tokens of appreciation are offered to increase the response rate and to offset any costs associated with participation.

Exhibit 2.

Participant	Token
Virtual interviews: 30-minute (program partners)	\$35 eGift card
In-person interviews for Case Studies: 30-minute (partners, participants)	\$35 gift card
Surveys Participant Survey (pre) Participant Survey (post) Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey	\$30 eGift card

A10. Assurances of confidentiality provided to respondents.

Standard consent language is included in primary data collection instruments and protocols, addressing the voluntary nature of the activity, risks and benefits to the participant, data confidentiality, and how the information will be used. Partners, arts engagement facilitators, and program participants may opt out of evaluation activities at any time, and grantees may opt out of case studies. The survey and interview introductions and email communications (Attachment C) indicate that the names of respondents, grantee organizations, or CFCE programs will be not disclosed, and the individual response data will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. All quotations incorporated into any reports or other materials will be used anonymously.

The CFCE evaluation uses data reflecting the overall grant program, as well as grantee and

participant data. Data security procedures will be strictly maintained throughout the evaluation to protect data and ensure confidentiality. All electronic data will be stored on password protected computers and secure servers and accessible only to the evaluation team. Participant Survey data will be deidentified, with identifiers replaced by unique identification numbers prior to analysis. The link between survey respondents' names and study identification numbers will be kept in a separate electronic file on password protected computers. Paper data will be stored in locked offices accessed only by the evaluation team. Whenever possible, paper data will be labeled with only the participant's study number or a code they generate. Any direct identifiers will be redacted from paper data as soon as it is processed for data entry. Data will not be made available to users external to the study. All data and identifiable information will be destroyed at the end of the study. Deidentified data will be submitted to the NEA at the conclusion of the evaluation.

A11. Justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

The interviews will focus on the experiences of grantees' staff members, partners, arts engagement facilitators, and program participants with the CFCE Grant Program. They address program implementation, engagement strategies, successes and challenges, and perceived outcomes. These questions are not sensitive in nature and do not ask for personal or confidential information. The purpose is to gather feedback on program delivery and impact, not on individual health, trauma, or private matters. This is also true for the Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey.

The Participant Survey addresses the CFCE participant outcomes: *Creative Expression, Social Connectedness, Resilience, and Independence and Successful Adaptation to Civilian Life*. As evident in the definitions of these outcomes (see section A2), these outcomes touch on participants' perceptions of themselves, their relationships, and their feelings. To that end, items on the Participant Survey ask about the respondent's self- perceptions, experiences, and adjustment, which may be considered private. The survey specifically avoids items that address clinical pathology or lifestyle. Demographic data (age group, military- connected status, race/ethnicity, and gender) will be collected to assess whether outcomes are affected by participants' demographic characteristics. Race/ethnicity survey questions comply with OMB standards. In the survey introduction, respondents will be informed they may skip any item or discontinue the survey at any time.

A12. Estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

Exhibit 3 shows the annual hour burden for the evaluation. Estimates for survey completion time are based calculations from survey development tools.

Program directors will provide 4.23 hours of support for survey implementation to coordinate administration with the contractor and to gather and submit participant contact information. They will also participate in a one-hour debrief interview. Estimated burden hours for directors is calculated by multiplying the number of hours for each activity by the anticipated number of directors. The numbers of persons are estimates received from M-

AAA based on previous grant years and current applications.

Exhibit 3.

Participant Description	Activity	Average Hours per Response	Number of Responses per Person	Number of Persons	Total Number of Responses	Estimated Burden (Hours)
Participant Survey		0.16	2	400	800	128
Program Participant	Participant Survey (Pre)	0.16	1	400	400	64
Program Participant	Participant Survey (Post)	0.16	1	400	400	64
Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey		0.26	1	100	100	26
Arts Engagement Facilitator	Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey	0.26	1	100	100	26
Grantee Interview		1	1	50	50	50
Grantee (lead staff)	Interview	1	1	50	50	50
Partner Interview		0.5	1	50	50	25
Partner	Interview	0.5	1	50	50	25
Participant Interview		0.5	1	64	64	32
Case Study Participants (grantee staff, partner, arts engagement facilitator, participants)	Interviews	0.5	1	8/site X 8 sites	64	32
Grant Leadership Interview		1	1	4	4	4
Grant leadership (NEA, M-AAA)	Interview	1	1	4	4	4
Total Annual Burden Hours						265

A13. Estimates of other total annual cost burden.

Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

There are no additional costs to respondents. The estimated cost burden is \$13,806.00. This is

based on the above figure of 390 hours of respondent burden multiplied by \$35.40, which is the

average hourly earnings of employees on private payrolls.¹² This amount was chosen, in part, because the occupations of program participants and arts engagement facilitators are unknown.

A14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government.

Total one-time contracted cost to the Federal Government for all data collection and analysis is \$298,600. See Exhibit 4. The annualized cost of this one-time data collection is \$99,533.

Exhibit 4.

Cost Category	Estimated Costs
Planning, coordination, oversight with NEA, M-AAA, TWG over 36 months	\$56,700
Instrument development and IRB/OMB Clearance	\$40,400
Data Collection, including tokens of appreciation and travel for site visits, and analysis	\$152,900
Reporting: documents, presentations, briefs, web materials	\$48,600
Total	\$298,600

A15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported on the burden worksheet.

This is a new information collection request. The information collected does not represent any program change.

A16. Plans for tabulation, and publication and project time schedule.

For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

¹² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: [Table B-3. Average hourly and weekly earnings of all employees on private nonfarm payrolls by industry sector, seasonally adjusted - 2025 M04 Results](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t19.htm): <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t19.htm>.

A final summary report will be prepared for internal use by the NEA and may be shared publicly through the NEA’s website and other dissemination channels. Any published materials will present aggregated data only, with no personally identifiable information included, in accordance with federal privacy and data protection standards.

Tabulation. The results of this one-time, mixed-methods evaluation will be analyzed and presented in both quantitative and qualitative formats. Quantitative survey data will be tabulated using descriptive statistics (e.g., frequencies, means) and, where appropriate, cross-tabulations to examine differences across respondent subgroups. For the Participant Survey, the choice of statistical tests for analyzing pre/post change will be dependent on a variety of factors, such as the number of programs where pre-post measurement of participant outcomes is feasible, overall sample size, variations in participant exposure to the program (duration, dose), and the characteristics of the data set. Qualitative data from grantee forms and open-ended survey items will be analyzed using both deductive and inductive analyses. Qualitative data will be analyzed with assistance from the Artificial Intelligence (AI) of ATLAS.ti to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes within the data.

Grantee Cohort Timeline. Two cohorts of grantees will participate in data collection during the evaluation period (see Exhibit 5), with two rounds of data collection for the FY2026 cohort and one round for the FY2027 cohort. Grantees may implement their programs any time within their grant period.

Exhibit 5.

	FY2026 Grantee Cohort	FY2027 Grantee Cohort
Applications due	January 2025	January 2026
Awards made	May 2025	May 2027
Project implementation	1-year grants: July 2025 – June 2026 2-year grants: July 2025 – June 2027	1-year grants: July 2026 – June 2027

Evaluation Reporting. Exhibit 6 presents the primary reporting and documentation for the evaluation. The reports and website content require up to three rounds of feedback. For the reports, the TWG will provide one of the three feedback rounds. For the two Progress Reports and the Final Report, one round of feedback will consist of a work session with the CFCE leadership. This work session will focus on sensemaking and interpretation of the findings, which will ensure the recommendations are necessary, useful, and actionable.

Exhibit 6.

Report	Content	Timing
Progress Report #1	Actions taken during first year of contract; recommendations for improving evaluation planning process for future (10 pages max)	August 2025
Progress Report #2 w/interim findings	Summary of evaluation findings; review of initial program and practice recommendations; actions taken during the second year of the contract (40 pages max, excluding appendices)	August 2026
Final Report <i>Table of Contents draft below</i>	Final evaluation findings with recommendations; executive summary with recommendations, infographics, graphics, pull-out quotes, and/or photographs (50 pages max excluding appendices)	August 2027
Stakeholder Briefs	To accompany the second and third report: 1-page brief for each major stakeholder group (NEA/M-AAA leadership, grantees, general public)	August 2026 August 2027
Website Content Support	In collaboration with the Creative Forces NRC team, new/revised website content to provide evidence-based resources for program applicants and grantees	August 2026 August 2027
Presentations	Up to 3 presentations of findings to stakeholders or general public through webinars, conferences, meetings, etc.	TBD

The final report will present the evaluation findings based on the qualitative and quantitative data, with illustrative examples drawn from case studies.

1. Executive Summary with Recommendations
2. Introduction
 - a. Grant program background
 - b. Theory of change and logic models (highlights, full models in appendices)
3. Research Questions and Methods Summary
4. Findings by Research Question
5. Program and Practice Recommendations
6. Appendices
 - a. Logic models
 - b. Methodology

- i. Evaluation Design
- ii. Data Collection
 - 1. Protocols and tools (including development)
 - 2. Methods
- iii. Sampling strategies
- iv. Case Studies
- c. Case Study Summaries

Project Schedule. Exhibit 7 presents the primary reporting and documentation for the evaluation. Because grantees may implement their programs any time within their grant period, the timeline for each grantee’s data collection will be unique.

Exhibit 7.

Timing	Activity
May 2025	CFCE awards made for 2025-2027 cohort
June 2025	Initial review of 2025-2027 Grantee Application Forms
July 2025	Initial contact with 2025-2027 grantees Evaluation Orientation Webinar Develop evaluation timeline for each grantee For grantees administering Participant Survey: • TA Webinar • Establish master calendar of all programs’ implementation dates • Coordinate with each grantee on process and pre/post survey administration dates Begin data collection for 2025-2026 (continues through June 2026)
August 2025	Progress Report #1
August 2025 – June 2026	Data collection for Year 1 of 2025-2027 cohort
October 2025-February 2026	Case studies
May 2026	CFCE awards made for 2026-2028 cohort
June 2026	Initial review of F2026-2028 Grantee Application Forms
July 2026	Analyses: Year 1 of 2025-2027 cohort
July 2026	Continue collection for 2025-2027 (continues through June 2027) Initial contact with 2026-2028 grantees Evaluation Orientation Webinar Develop evaluation timeline for each grantee For grantees administering Participant Survey: • TA Webinar

	• Establish master calendar of all programs' implementation dates • Coordinate with each grantee on process and pre/post survey administration dates Begin data collection for 2026-2027 (continues through June 2027)
August 2026	Progress Report #2; Interim findings
August 2026 – June 2027	Data collection for Year 2 of 2025-2027 cohort and Year 1 of 2026-2028 cohort
July 2027	Analyses: Years 1 and 2 of 2025-2027 cohort plus Year 1 of 2026-2028 cohort TWG reviews findings
July 2027	PW completes analyses and drafts report (note: grantees may submit final reports during July)
August 2027	Final report, website content, stakeholder briefs

A17. Displaying the OMB Approval Expiration Date.

If you are seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

The NEA will display the expiration date of OMB approval and the OMB approval number on all instruments associated with this information collection, including forms and surveys.

A18. Exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19.

Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.

No exceptions are necessary for this information collection. The agency is able to certify compliance with all provisions under Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.