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GRANTS

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. Please provide details about the underserved audience you select in your application using relevant statistics and anecdotal information. Proposals should detail the efforts made to reach the identified underserved population. Grants are available for professional arts programming and for projects that emphasize the potential of the arts in community development.

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 an appropriate way to engage with the identified underserved audience.

To ensure that Challenge America funding reaches new organizations and communities, the National Endowment for the Arts 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" or ending with "78-13"), 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 2017, 2018, and 2019 may **not** apply under these FY 2020 guidelines. That organization may apply for FY 2020 support under other National Endowment for the Arts funding opportunities including Art Works.

Projects

This category supports focused, distinct projects that take place over limited periods of time and involve limited geographic areas.

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 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.** The guest artist is engaged specifically for the proposed project, and is not considered a regular company member, board member, or staff of the applicant organization. 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.

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.

Allowable guest artist public event activities are broad, and may include a festival; exhibition; literary reading; musical, theatrical, or multi-media performance; media screening; broadcast; or lecture. The public 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 associated with the project, including supplies, venue costs, marketing, professional documentation of the project, and program enhancements specific to this grant project. 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 active role in the required public event should be clearly described within the application narrative, including the schedule of activities.

NOTE: Projects that involve K-12 standards-based arts instruction are not eligible. (See Arts Education in the Art Works category.) Other classes and workshops are eligible expenses but must include a public event with active involvement by the participating guest artist.

- **Collaborative Marketing Campaigns, which may include unified promotion projects and/or cultural tourism projects incorporating the offerings of multiple institutions.** 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, wayfinding, etc.) designed to benefit several local organizations in a community. Cultural tourism projects will market and promote cultural assets to enhance public engagement with arts and culture in communities and to populations that have been historically underserved. Note that campaigns should involve a partnership promoting the work of several

organizations to extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations, **not** a promotional project for a single organization.

- **Public Art Projects, community-based and professionally directed.** 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. Please see [“Public Art Resources”](#) for additional information.

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.

For information on how to apply, see the “To Apply” box on the right.

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 with NEPA/NHPA.

Some of the common project types that garner a NHPA review are:

- A project involving or occurring near a district, site, building, landscape, structure or object that is at least 50 years old or older and therefore included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (please note that in some instances, buildings or structures may be included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places that are less than 50 years old).
- 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. The results of the review may impact our ability to make a grant award/our ability to release grant funds. If you are recommended for an award which may have historic preservation or environmental concerns (NHPA/NEPA), you will be notified and asked to provide additional information. Your thorough and complete information for all project activities and locations will expedite the review. The NEA cannot release an award and/or grant funds until the historic preservation and/or environmental review is complete.

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](#).

Note: 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.

Deadline

Part 1 - Submit to Grants.gov	April 11, 2019
<i>Prepare application material so that it's ready to upload when the Applicant Portal opens</i>	
Part 2 - Submit to Applicant Portal	April 16-23, 2019
Earliest Beginning Date for National Endowment for the Arts Period of Performance	January 1, 2020

Note: To allow time to resolve any problems you might encounter, we strongly recommend that you register/renew your Grants.gov/SAM registration by at least March 20, 2019 and submit to Grants.gov by at least April 2, 2019.

If your organization applies to the Challenge America category, it may not submit another application to the Art Works category. See "[Applicant Eligibility/Application Limits](#)" for further information.

Contact

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



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APPLICANT RESOURCES

- [Application Checklist](#)
- [Online Tutorial: Using the Grant Application Form \(GAF\)](#)
- [Challenge America Guidelines Workshop Video \(2/27/19\)](#)
- [Webinar for Challenge America Applicants Interested in Applying to Art Works \(recording\)](#)
- [Sample Application Narratives](#)
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[Social Media Scam Regarding NEA Grants](#)

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