

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Request

- We urge Congress to provide \$135 million in supplemental COVID-19 economic relief grants and at least \$176 million in regular FY 2022 appropriations for the NEA.

Introduction

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) provides funding to state arts agencies and to nonprofit arts institutions including museums. Its mission is to make art accessible to all and to provide leadership in arts education.

Established in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts supports great art in every congressional district. NEA grants to museums help them exhibit, preserve, and interpret art through exhibitions, residencies, publications, commissions, public art works, conservation, documentation, and public programs, including the performing arts. Grants are also awarded for research, for example into the benefits of museum field trips for K-12 students. Grants are awarded for specific projects and require one-to-one matching funds from recipients.

Since 2010, the National Endowment for the Arts has collaborated with Blue Star Families and the U.S. Department of Defense on Blue Star Museums, which provides free museum admission to active duty military and their families all summer long. In 2019, more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states participated, reaching on average more than 900,000 military members and their families.

The agency also runs the Arts & Artifacts Indemnity program, which reduces the cost of insuring major exhibitions. Absent this program, such exhibitions would need to be reduced in scale. It saves museums millions of dollars annually, at a cost of almost zero to taxpayers.

Congress appropriated \$75 million to the National Endowment for the Arts through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act to preserve jobs and help support organizations forced to close operations due to the spread of COVID-19. Forty percent of this funding was [awarded](#) directly to

NEA Funding History

	Appropriation (in millions)
FY10	\$167.5
FY 11	\$154.7
FY 12	\$146
FY 13 CR*	\$146
FY 14	\$146
FY 15	\$145
FY 16	\$147.9
FY 17	\$149.8
FY 18	\$152.8
FY 19	\$155
FY 20	\$162.25
FY 21	\$167.5
FY 22 President's Request	TBD

*In FY 2013, across-the-board sequestration cuts reduced NEA's effective funding to \$138.4 million.

"National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)" - continued:

state and regional arts agencies to distribute through their funding programs. On July 1, the Arts Endowment [announced](#) that 855 organizations, including museums—organizations located in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico—would receive a total of \$44.5 million in nonmatching funds to support staff salaries, fees for artists or contractual personnel, and facilities costs.

Talking Points

- In 2019, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) provided more than 150 awards to museums and museum-related projects, totaling nearly than \$5 million.
- The NEA's report, U.S. Trends in Arts Attendance and Literary Reading: 2002-2017, notes that in 2017, 23.7 percent of US adults (57.5 million people) visited an art museum or gallery. That share of adults represents an increase of 12.9 percent from 2012 to 2017. Attendance rates were helped by increases among African Americans, 18-24 year-olds, 35-44 year-olds, and adults who received only "some college" education.
- Receiving a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts confers prestige on supported projects, strengthening museums' ability to attract matching funds from other public and private funders. On average, each dollar awarded by the Arts Endowment leverages up to nine dollars from other sources.
- The federal role of the National Endowment for the Arts is uniquely valuable.
- Forty percent of NEA's grant funds are distributed to state arts agencies for re-granting, ensuring that states may set their own priorities.

Status

- The National Endowment for the Arts is funded through the Interior & Environment appropriations bill. The final FY 2021 spending package provided \$167.5 million, an increase of \$5 million over FY 2020.