

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

Request

We urge Congress to provide at least \$207 million for the NEA for FY 2024, level with FY 2023, and robust funding for FY 2025.

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 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. Typically each year more than 2,000 museums in all 50 states participate, 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 limiting visitors and students access to great art and artifacts from around the world. It saves museums millions of dollars annually, at a cost of almost zero to taxpayers.

Talking Points

- Annually, the National Endowment for the Arts typically provides more than 150 awards to museums and museum-related projects, totaling approximately \$5 million.
- 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 NEA leverages up to nine dollars from other sources.

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- The federal role of the National Endowment for the Arts is uniquely valuable.
- 40% of NEA's grant funds are distributed to state arts agencies for re-granting, ensuring that states may set their own priorities.

Status

The NEA is funded through the Interior & Environment appropriations bill. It was funded at \$207 million for FY 2023 and currently is operating at the same level awaiting Congressional approval of FY 2024 funding. FY 2024 began on October 1, 2023. So far, the full Senate Appropriations Committee approved a bill with funding for FY 2024 level with FY 2023 for NEA. The House approved a bill that if enacted would cut FY 2024 funding by 10% compared with FY 2023 to \$186.3 million for the agency. During floor consideration in the House an amendment to eliminate NEA's funding for FY 2024 was overwhelmingly defeated [129–292](#) with strong bipartisan support.

NEA Funding History

	Appropriation (in millions)
FY 10	\$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	\$180
FY 23	\$207
FY 24	TBD

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