

From: John Highkin <john@fernstreetcircus.com>

Sent: Saturday, July 9, 2022 12:20 PM

To: Daniel Beattie <beattied@arts.gov>

Subject: Blanket Justification for National Endowment for the Arts Funding Application Guidelines and Requirements.

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Dear Mr. Beattie,

I am responding to the NEA's posting about the Paperwork Reduction Act. More than anything, I want to commend the Endowment for its efforts to reduce paperwork and, especially, to reduce respondent burden. As executive director of an NEA-funded agency, I appreciate the brevity and concision of NEA grants. We have been funded since 2018 in the Art Works program (multi-disciplinary) as well as through CARES Act and American Rescue Plan. Recently, I was a multi-disciplinary panelist.

In all my dealings with the Endowment, I have found the processes fair and not burdensome. This is in contrast to the both our local and state arts agencies which in recent years have created program and organizational support grants that have excessive narrative requirements (14-15 300 word questions in recent California Arts Council grants). Further, CAC program grants (9 in number?) were all due on the same day, which added to the burden since many of us in arts education submitted at least 3 grants.

I write this really to urge the Endowment to continue examining the effectiveness, clarity and brevity of both its applications and its reporting requirements. At the same time I hope that the NEA as the national leader in government arts agencies, will continue to serve as a model in reducing the burden on responding arts agencies. Further, I hope that the NEA leadership at all levels will urge state and local government arts agencies to consider the cost in financial and human terms that their excessively long, repetitive grants cause to those of us in the field.

Public monies need to be accessible and not expensive (in terms of staff time and cost). It seems that the Endowment recognizes this - it is high time that local and state agencies do the same.

I thank you again for your agency's wisdom and important service to the field and, through us, to citizens across the country.

Yours,

John

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