

**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 B Supporting Statement**

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Attachment D: IRB Notice of Approval

Attachment E: Cognitive Testing Report: Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey

Attachment F: Cognitive Testing Report: Participant Survey

B.1 Respondent universe and sampling methods

Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

This outcomes evaluation of the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant Program will collect information between July 2025 and July 2027 from two cohorts of grantees: the 2025-2027 cohort (50 grantees, two years of data collection) and the 2026-2028 cohort (50 grantees, one year of data collection). These grantees comprise the respondent universe.

The study's sample will be selected through a competitive RFP process administrated by Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) acting as a cooperator for the National Endowment for the Arts. In the context of this information collection, the sampling universe consists of all organizations funded through the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant Program, as they represent the full population eligible to implement the program and to engage evaluation activities.

The target populations for the evaluation include four groups of stakeholders: grantees, grantee partners, arts engagement facilitators, and program participants. A sample of eight grantees will also participate in site visits involving additional interviews.

Grantee interview (Attachment B). Participation in a virtual 50-minute interview is required for all grantees as part of their award.

Partner interview (Attachment B). Partnerships are a requirement of the grant program. Each grantee will identify a partner to participate in a virtual 30-minute interview.

Case Study Site visit interviews (Attachment B). Eight grantees from the 2025-2027 cohort will be selected to participate in a one-day site visit for observation of program activities and additional eight, 30-minute interviews with grantee staff, partners, and/or program participants. The sample will be representative of the full grantee cohort, with the criteria determined by the evaluation's Technical Working Group based on characteristics of the cohort (e.g., program model, arts discipline, military population served, geography, demographics). Three alternate programs will be identified in case a selected grantee declines. All site visits will be conducted during the first year of the 2025-2026 cohort.

Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey (Attachment B). Each Community Engagement program will have one or more arts engagement facilitators that lead activities for participants. All arts engagement facilitators across the entire grant program will receive the survey.

Pre/Post Individually-Matched Participant Survey (Attachment B). The participant survey will be administered to a subset of grantees, depending on two criteria. First, the program implementation model must provide a minimum of eight hours or three sessions in order to qualify for a pre/post survey. This minimum is required in order for participants to have sufficient exposure to the programming that measurable change may occur, and to allow for

pre and post survey administration. Second, grantees may decline participation for their program participants. Using the Grantee Application Form, the evaluator will identify grants that support participant engagement (as opposed to networking, capacity building) and contact grantees to determine the number of sessions and hours their program provides for participants. All participants in programs that meet the minimum criteria will be asked to complete the survey at the beginning (pre) and end (post) of the program or engagement period. Data on the number of program sessions and hours of engagement for the CFCE program will be collected.

A pilot study of the Participant Survey tested several modes and achieved a response rate of 67% (136 out of 204) for the pre-survey, across modalities. There was attrition for the post survey, with a response rate of 46% (93 out of 204; 68% of the pre-survey respondents). The pilot study (OMB Control Number 3135-0146) made recommendations to improve response rates, and these will be incorporated into the survey administration for the evaluation, along with an eGift gift card incentive. Estimated response rates for the pre and post surveys during the evaluation are 70% and 60%, respectively. Exhibit 1 summarizes the data collection respondents and anticipated response rates.

Exhibit 1.

	Timing in a grantee's program		Estimated pool of respondents		Target response rate
			2025-2026	2026-2027	
Grantee interview	Post	1 interview/grantee	50	50	100%
Partner interview	Post	1 interview/grantee	50	50	90%

Case Study Site Visit interviews <i>2025-2027 cohort only</i>	During	8 of 50 grantees, up to 8 interviews/site	64	0	100%
Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey ⁺	Post	1 survey/facilitator	100	100	80%
Participant Pre Survey*	Program beginning	1 survey/participant	300-500	300-500	75%
Participant Post Survey*	Program end	1 survey/participant	300-500	300-500	65%

⁺Estimates based on an average of 2 arts engagement facilitators per grantee

*M-AAA estimates 50 new grantees per cohort, with 24-30 grantees eligible for the pre/post survey, yielding a pool of 300-500 respondents per cohort

B.2 Procedures for the collection of information

Describe the procedures for the collection of information, including

- statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,
- estimation procedure,
- degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,
- unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and
- any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

This outcomes evaluation of the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant Program is a one-time data collection using interviews, surveys, and site visits. No sampling is required for grantee interviews, partner interviews, or the Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey as they are intended for all potential respondents in those groups.

The Participant Survey will be provided to all programs that meet two criteria: 1) a minimum of 8 hours or three sessions of programming, and 2) the grantee opts into the survey. The sample consists of all programs meeting these criteria. Post hoc analysis will compare characteristics of the grantee/programs that opt in with those that do not in order to identify any systematic

bias.

For the selection of eight grantees and three alternates for case study site visits, the evaluator will utilize a purposive sampling strategy with advisement from the evaluation's Technical Working Group. To create a representative sample, the evaluator will conduct an initial descriptive analysis of the 2025-2026 cohort and use this information to frame the sample.

Variables that will be considered include service delivery model, rural/urban location, region, type of organization and/partners, grant tier, arts discipline, and population served. If other important variables emerge during the descriptive analysis, they will be considered as well.

Grantees participating in the site visits will be asked to include program staff, partners, and arts engagement facilitators in the interviews. They may also invite program participants at their discretion. This is to allow participants to maintain anonymity, which is carefully protected by some programs.

B.3 Methods to maximize the response rates and to deal with nonresponse

Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Enhancing Response Rates by Engaging Grantees

At the beginning of each grant period, the evaluation team will provide webinars for grantees to introduce the evaluation. Grantee engagement and buy in will be cultivated through personal contact and opportunities for grantees to learn and ask questions about the

evaluation. Each grantee will be assigned one evaluator who will serve as their evaluation contact for the entire grant period. In addition, two webinars will be provided at the beginning of each cohort.

Evaluation Orientation Webinar. At the beginning of each grant year (July/August of 2025 and 2026) a brief, optional webinar will introduce the evaluation team, provide a brief overview of evaluation activities, and explain how the information will be used. This is also an opportunity to explain the purpose of the Participant Survey, the program eligibility requirements for participating in the survey, and the selection process for the case studies. The informational section of the webinar will last approximately 20 minutes and will be followed by Q&A. The webinar will be recorded for grantees to access later.

Technical Assistance Webinar for the Participant Survey. For grantees who administer the Participant Survey, there will be a required technical assistance webinar. The webinar will cover the Participant Survey, modes of implementation and technical requirements, the role of grantees in administering the survey, and how the outcomes will be used. It will also cover information for participants and questions they may have. The webinar will be recorded for grantees to access later via the M-AAA website.

Enhancing Response Rates for Required Grantee Interviews (50-minute, virtual)

Grantees are required to participate in one interview for the evaluation as part of their grant award. Therefore, they have advance notice of the interview and the encouragement from the

grant programs leadership to participate. In addition, several other techniques will be used to ensure high response rates.

- Relationship with one evaluator consistently throughout the grant period
- Personal contact and direct outreach
- Advance notice and flexible scheduling
- Follow-up reminders

Enhancing Response Rates for Partner Interviews (30-minute, virtual)

As part of their award, each grantee will be requested to identify one partner for an interview and to provide an introduction. Partners are not required to participate. Several techniques will be used to encourage high response rates.

- Introduction made by grantee
- Personal contact and direct outreach
- Advance notice and flexible scheduling
- Follow-up reminders
- Incentive: \$35 eGift card

Enhancing Response Rates for Case Study Site Visit Interviews (30-minute, virtual)

Once grantees commit to the case study, the evaluator will coordinate with their contact person to identify a date that is convenient to the grantee and their program. The evaluator will collaborate with the contact to develop a site visit schedule that minimizes disruption to their organization and program. The evaluator will manage all logistics related to travel, removing

this burden from the grantee. The following measures will also be used to enhance response rates.

- Introduction made by grantee
- Personal contact and direct outreach
- Advance notice and flexible scheduling
- Follow-up reminders
- Incentive: \$35 gift card/interview

Enhancing Response Rates for Surveys

Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey (anonymous, web-based). Arts engagement facilitators across all programs in both cohorts will be invited to complete the Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey. The results of cognitive testing of this survey with current arts engagement facilitators suggest a high level of interest in and support for this survey, which is promising for the response rate. The following measures will be taken to enhance the response rate.

- Introduction made by grantee
- Personal contact and direct outreach
- Show the association with Creative Forces and the National Endowment for the Arts (e.g., logos) to legitimize the survey
- Explanation of the value of the survey and how the information will be used
- Follow-up reminders
- Incentive: \$30 eGift card

Participant Survey. Grantees’ community engagement programs will vary considerably on multiple dimensions: implementation model, frequency and duration of each session, overall duration of the program, arts discipline, specific target population, and number of people served, among others. Results of a pilot study of the participant survey recommended offering several different administration modes and tailoring them to the individual grantee. Based on these findings, as well as input from the evaluation’s Technical Working Group and feedback from the survey’s cognitive testing participants, three different administration modes will be offered (see Exhibit 2). Each grantee will select the mode that is most appropriate for their program and participants, with guidance from the evaluation team. Each grantee will use the same mode at the pre and post time points. The evaluation team will provide technical assistance and communication materials to the grantee aligned with their chosen method. Data analyses will compare outcomes by mode to determine whether mode is a confounding factor.

Exhibit 2.

E-Mail	Surveys are administered through email invitations using SurveyMonkey. Evaluators work with each grantee to create a contact list of participants' email addresses and send an initial email with a unique link to the pre-program survey. This will occur just before the program begins or immediately after it first convenes, if contact information is not available prior to the program. At the end of the program, evaluators send a follow-up email with a link to the post-program survey. This method ensures direct delivery to participants, allowing for easy tracking of responses and automated reminders for non-responders.
Embed Surveys in Program	This approach integrates pre- and post-program surveys directly into the workflow of the program using paper copies or an embedded link or QR code. For example, in-person programs can request paper copies with

	unique identification numbers for each participant, which can be completed at the onset of the program and at the end of the program. If the program involves a series of online modules or webinars, the survey will be integrated into the program during the first and final sessions. Each participant will have a unique identification number to complete the survey online. This method minimizes the chance of losing participants between survey administrations.
Kiosk for In-Person Programs	An alternative for in-person programs, this approach uses SurveyMonkey's kiosk mode to administer surveys on-site. Each participant will have a unique identification number. Using the organization's tablets or computers, participants can complete the pre-survey as they arrive and the post-survey at the end of the program. This ensures high response rates and immediate data collection at the onset and end of the program.

During the survey introduction provided by the grantee, and in the introductory language within the survey instrument, respondents will be informed that their data will be matched pre/post and how confidentiality will be maintained. To match surveys using email in SurveyMonkey, each participant's email address will be used as a unique identifier. When participants receive their pre-survey link via email, their responses will automatically be associated with their email address in the system. After the program, the post-survey will be sent to the same email, allowing SurveyMonkey to link the responses for analysis. For paper and kiosk-administered surveys, participants will be asked to create and record a unique ID number, such as a combination of initials and birthdate, on both the pre and post surveys. This unique identifier ensures anonymity while enabling the evaluator to accurately match the pre and post responses for comparison.

Additional techniques will be used to enhance participants' response rates.

- Technical assistance for grantees to administer the survey, including information on how to discuss the survey with grantees and explain how the data will be used
- Participants introduced to the survey by grantee, emphasizing the importance and legitimacy of the study
- Personal contact and direct outreach
- Show the association with Creative Forces and the National Endowment for the Arts (e.g., logos) to legitimize the survey
- Follow-up reminders
- Incentive: \$30 eGift card

Dealing with Issues of Non-Response

In the analysis phase of the surveys, non-response bias will be assessed by comparing known characteristics of respondents and non-respondents, when such data are available (e.g., program type, location, demographics). If notable differences are identified, weighting adjustments or imputation methods may be used to mitigate bias and ensure the findings are as representative as possible of the full population.

For the pool of grantees who are eligible to administer the Participant Survey, comparisons will be made between the organizations that opt into the survey and those that decline. This will be important for understanding the degree to which participant survey findings can be generalized to the Creative Forces Community Engagement Program as a whole and potentially to other

community arts engagement programs serving military-connected populations.

B.4 Test of procedures or methods to be undertaken

Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Arts Engagement Facilitator Survey. The evaluator tested this survey in April 2025, with six arts engagement facilitators from multiple artistic disciplines and community engagement programs. The objectives of the testing were to detect issues of usability, clarity, and readability in the survey instrument. Minor changes were made to the survey instrument following the completion of cognitive testing. The Cognitive Testing Report can be found in Attachment E.

Participant Survey. In 2021, the evaluator tested this survey with nine members of the military-connected population, who were also involved in community arts engagement programs as staff members. The objectives of the testing were to detect issues of usability, clarity, and readability in the survey instrument. Changes were made to the survey instrument following the completion of cognitive testing. The survey was then pilot tested in 2023. The results from that study inform the plans for administration of the survey in the upcoming evaluation. They also resulted in a targeted revision of the survey. In March 2025, the revised version was tested with eight members of the military-connected population, who were involved in community arts engagement programs as participants. Minor changes were made to the survey instrument following the completion of cognitive testing. The Cognitive Testing Report can be found in Attachment F).

Interview protocols. The Technical Working Group that advises this evaluation reviewed the

interview protocols (Attachment B) and provided feedback. No other testing was performed.

B.5 Individuals consulted on statistical aspects & individuals collecting and/or analyzing data

Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

The Arts Endowment contracted ProgramWorks to develop the Participant Outcomes Survey and to conduct cognitive testing of the survey. See Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3.

Name	Title (Project Role)	Organizational Affiliation and Address	Contact Information
Parties doing the data collection and analysis			
Shawn Bachtler	Project manager	ProgramWorks; 8155 13th Ave SW, Seattle, WA 98106	206-595-5878 shawnbachtler@gmail.com
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National Endowment for the Arts staff consulted			
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