



**National  
Endowment  
for the Arts**  
arts.gov

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is an independent federal agency dedicated to strengthening the creative capacity of our communities by providing all Americans with diverse opportunities for arts participation.

## Our Town Creative Placemaking Grant Program

NEA supports creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. Projects encourage creative activity, develop community identity and a sense of place, and help revitalize local economies. Since the Our Town program's inception in 2011, the NEA has supported 389 place-based projects totaling more than \$30 million in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.



Wilson, NC: Whirligig Public Art Park

**PROJECT EXAMPLES:** [arts.gov/exploring-our-town/](https://arts.gov/exploring-our-town/)  
**PROJECT TYPES:** Cultural Planning, Arts Engagement, Design  
**DEADLINE:** September (annually)  
**GRANT AMOUNTS:** \$25,000 to \$200,000  
**GRANT GUIDELINES :** [arts.gov > Grants > Apply for a Grant](https://arts.gov/grants)  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Partnership between local government or federally-recognized tribal government and a nonprofit; additional partners encouraged  
**QUESTIONS:** [ot@arts.gov](mailto:ot@arts.gov)  
**RESOURCES:** <https://www.arts.gov/artistic-fields/creative-placemaking>

## Art Works Grant Program

This category supports the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, public engagement with diverse and excellent art, lifelong learning in the arts, and the strengthening of communities through the arts. Typical projects include the commissioning and development of new work, the presentation of performances or exhibitions at home or on tour, arts education projects, documentation and preservation of significant artworks or cultural traditions, publications, innovative uses of new models or technology to create work or engage audiences, and the professional training of artists.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:** February and July (twice annually)  
**GRANT AMOUNTS:** \$10,000 to \$100,000  
**ELIGIBILITY:** Nonprofit 501c3 organization, government entity or federally-recognized tribe with 3 years of programming history



Olympia, WA: Canoe Journey

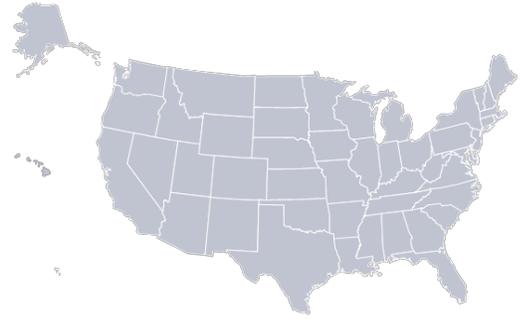
## Challenge America Grant Program

These grants enable organizations, particularly those that are small or mid-sized, to extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations—those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Grants are available for professional arts programming and for projects that emphasize the potential of the arts in community development.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE:** April (annually)  
**GRANT AMOUNTS:** \$10,000  
**QUESTIONS:** [challengeamerica@arts.gov](mailto:challengeamerica@arts.gov)

## State, Regional, and Local Partnerships

National Endowment for the Arts staff are based in Washington, DC but work with a variety of partners, including state arts agencies. 40% of NEA's grant funding goes directly to state arts agencies via partnership agreements that provide funds to address priorities identified at the state level and that address NEA outcomes. The regional arts organizations, each representing a geographic grouping of states, assist the NEA in distributing funds and programs nationally through touring and other activities that are responsive to the needs of the region. <https://www.arts.gov/partners/state-regional>



Across the United States, thousands of local arts agencies (LAAs) provide a wide range of programs and services to help support and enable arts and culture at the local level. LAAs are intermediaries, serving artists and arts organizations, local residents, visitors and other partners. All strive to enhance the quality of life in their communities by working to increase public access to the arts.

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## Federal Agency Partnerships

Community-driven work has demonstrated that arts stakeholders are fundamental players in a community's transformation. Arts based community development can be done in a way that is uniquely authentic, equitable, and supportive of existing community assets. Arts and culture can help strengthen communities by helping to revitalize local economies, providing rich engagement for youth, impacting educational outcomes, creating spaces and places where people want to be, facilitating authentic engagement and community planning, reimagining vacant properties, and improving quality of life for existing residents. NEA has been engaged in collaborating with fellow federal agencies, including U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Education, among others.

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## Mayors' Institute on City Design

The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative. Since 1986, MICD has helped transform communities through design by preparing mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities. MICD sessions are small, closed-door, 2 1/2 day symposiums intended to offer the invited mayors a better understanding of city design. In this private setting, mayors have the rare opportunity to openly discuss some of the challenges in your community and learn how to address them from the perspective of city design. [www.micd.org](http://www.micd.org)

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## Citizens' Institute on Rural Design

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ (CIRD) is a partnership between National Endowment for the Arts and U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide communities access to the resources they need to convert their own good ideas into reality. CIRD works with communities with populations of 50,000 or less, and offers annual competitive funding to as many as four small towns or rural communities to host a two-and-a-half day community design workshop. With support from a wide range of design, planning and creative placemaking professionals, the workshops bring together local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government to develop actionable solutions to the community's pressing design challenges. The community receives additional support through webinars, conference calls, and web-based resources. [www.rural-design.org](http://www.rural-design.org)



*Houston, MS: CIRD workshop*