# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS



STRATEGIC PLAN
FY 2003 - 2008

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#### NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

#### Vision

A Nation in which artistic excellence is celebrated, supported, and available to all.

#### Mission

The National Endowment for the Arts enriches our Nation and its diverse cultural heritage by supporting works of artistic excellence, advancing learning in the arts, and strengthening the arts in communities throughout the country.

#### Goals

#### **Artistic Creativity and Preservation**

To encourage and support artistic creativity and preserve our diverse cultural heritage.

#### **Learning in the Arts**

To advance learning in the arts.

#### **Access to the Arts**

To make the arts more widely available in communities throughout the country.

#### Partnerships for the Arts

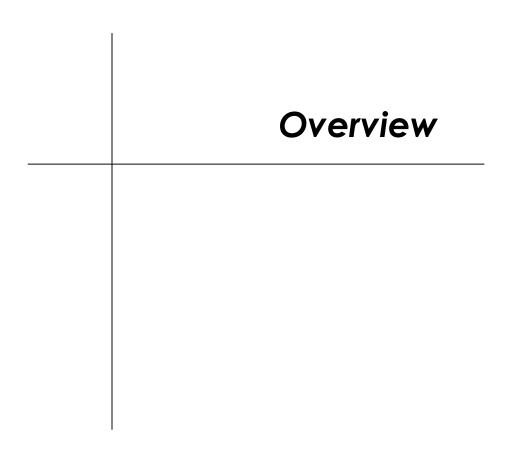
To develop and maintain partnerships that advance the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The arts and humanities serve as an incomparable mirror and a record of humanity's response to the joys, tragedies, and mysteries of life. They help us better understand ourselves and our world. And they are essential to preserving and celebrating our democratic way of life.

President George W. Bush, on April 22, 2002, at the ceremony honoring the recipients of the National Medal of Arts.

In wake of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the role of the arts in "preserving and celebrating our democratic way of life" became more central than ever. Across the country, in ceremonies large and small, Americans turned to the arts to express the full range of their emotions—grief for the fallen, pride in their heroic example, resolve in the face of future perils, and a strengthened commitment to our Nation. In song and speech, picture and verse, a Nation grieved and renewed itself, reminding us again of the power of art.

For thirty-seven years, the National Endowment for the Arts has played a leadership role in the artistic life of our Nation. These years have witnessed an unprecedented flowering of the arts throughout America—far beyond the confines of a few large cities. As a catalyst, as a convener, and as a national advocate for the arts, the Arts Endowment has helped to focus and coordinate the enormous creative energies and resources of our State, local, voluntary and private institutions, and of our citizens themselves.

As the Congress of the United States recognized in the 1965 legislation creating the Arts Endowment:

The world leadership which has come to the United States cannot rest solely upon superior power, wealth, and technology, but must be solidly founded upon worldwide respect and admiration for the Nation's high qualities as a leader in the realm of ideas and of the spirit.

Fostering understanding and appreciation of the arts in our young people; helping to bring the arts to millions of Americans of all ages and backgrounds; assisting those who create, share, and yearn for the arts: all this contributes to the crucial American "realm of ideas and of the spirit" referred to in the Arts Endowment's founding legislation.

Dedicated to this mission, the Arts Endowment approaches its fifth decade of service with a renewed sense of purpose, and with a determination to learn from experience and attain an ever-sharper focus on its core mission. Responsiveness, responsibility, and results-measured achievement of clearly defined goals: these are the guiding principles of the Strategic Plan outlined in the pages that follow.

Like the ever-evolving nature of the arts, the Arts Endowment recognizes the critical need to look forward. The future, we believe, is bright, and our Nation is poised for a renewed commitment to the arts. This plan charts some of the ways in which the National Endowment for the Arts can help to forge that future.

#### **CONCEPTS**

As the Arts Endowment began to assess its future during this revision of its Strategic Plan, it was guided by the principles expressed in the Agency's enabling legislation, particularly that "the arts ... belong to all the people of the United States." It was also guided by the following concepts:

- Artistic work and freedom of expression are a vital part of any democratic society.
- The arts are universal, having the ability to cross all boundaries whether imposed by geography, economic conditions, ethnic background, or disability.
- ➤ Participating in the arts and engaging in creative endeavors are an essential part of human development.
- Artists are among our Nation's most important innovators and creators.
- Important cultural artifacts and traditions must be protected and sustained to ensure that our heritage is preserved for future generations.
- Revitalizing the artistic culture of our Nation requires strengthening educational activity in the arts, especially for the young.
- Learning in the arts makes a positive contribution to our young people's academic achievement, interpersonal skills, confidence, motivation to succeed, and preparation for work.
- ➤ The arts bolster our economy through expenditures by arts organizations and the participating public.
- ➤ Community life and development are enhanced by the presence and availability of the arts, artists, and arts organizations.
- National support of the arts must rely upon partnerships that build on existing strengths and assets within our communities.

#### **UNIQUE ROLE**

This Strategic Plan was also guided by the unique role of the Arts Endowment in support of the arts including its leadership role as catalyst and standard-bearer. Key aspects include:

- > Providing national recognition of artistic excellence and merit.
- > Providing national leadership in arts learning.
- > Providing access to the arts for all.
- Recognizing, preserving, and sharing America's diverse cultural traditions and heritage.
- > Serving as a powerful financial catalyst.
- > Establishing national standards and incentives for State and local government support for the arts.
- ➤ Bringing together representatives of the arts and the public and private sectors at the national, regional, and community levels.
- ➤ Providing national leadership and encouragement for communication, dialogue, research, and new thinking on issues important to the future of the arts.
- > Providing national stewardship and nurturing of distinct artistic fields.
- > Serving as a national symbol and voice for American culture at home and abroad.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN AS FRAMEWORK

The Arts Endowment's Strategic Planning process was not limited to the development of a revised plan. Rather, our charge was to develop a vision, mission, and an integral plan to ensure that all future Agency work is undertaken in a concerted, effective manner. This includes:

- Budget development and the allocation of resources,
- General management and business processes,

- Grant application guideline development, and
- Data collection and reporting.

Today's plan is an important management tool that will guide all Agency activity during the next few years. It will also serve as a framework for an ongoing assessment of our business processes and for determining how to best allocate limited resources. An examination of our plan, our budget, and our guidelines clearly shows how they complement one another.

#### **IMPROVEMENTS**

This Strategic Plan incorporates a number of significant improvements:

- 1. We have defined outcomes for all program areas outcomes that we believe are appropriate for the specialized work of the Arts Endowment.
- 2. We have consolidated our goals; we now have just four programmatic goals and a management goal.
- 3. We have revised our Agency partnership and management goals to strengthen and clarify their connection to, and support of, the Arts Endowment's mission.
- 4. The general goals and outcomes in the Strategic Plan and the performance goals in our annual Performance Plans will mirror one another.
- 5. We have developed performance indicators that will be presented in our annual Performance Plans. These indicators reflect quantitative and qualitative assessments that recognize the nature of the Arts Endowment's business and mission.
- 6. Responsibility for program evaluation will be assigned to an Agency office that will develop and implement an annual evaluation plan.

#### BUILDING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE

A close examination of the plan should demonstrate to the American people that the National Endowment for the Arts is an Agency rededicated to:

- Accountability in management and business processes,
- Integrity in decision-making,
- The support of excellence,
- Responsive leadership through policy, research, education, and convening in addition to grantmaking, and

• Recognition that Federal support, rather than an end in itself, serves as a strong financial stimulus for private sector support of the arts.

As we look to the celebration of the Arts Endowment's 40th anniversary, we envision an agency – clearly focused – with an increased capacity to serve the public and to demonstrate its accomplishments and importance to the life of the Nation.

#### PROGRAM GOALS

In many respects, this section constitutes the heart and soul of our Agency's Strategic Plan. It is here that the Arts Endowment articulates public benefit. As noted earlier, the Arts Endowment has consolidated the number of its program goals and identified intended outcomes for each. The result is four clear program goals for the Arts Endowment:

- To encourage and support artistic creativity and preserve our diverse cultural heritage,
- To advance learning in the arts,
- To make the arts more widely available in communities throughout the country, and
- To develop and maintain partnerships that advance the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts.

We will present each goal similarly, providing a context, legislative bases, intended outcomes, planned strategies, and future directions for each.

In developing this Strategic Plan, the Arts Endowment also reviewed its programs and strategies. Those articulated in this section build upon past success, but also look to the future. This plan represents the priorities of the Arts Endowment. The presentation of each goal, including the stated outcomes, represents current core Agency functions.

Changes to current directions, including broadening of the intended outcomes, will depend on the resources available. Within the description of each goal, the Arts Endowment has identified future directions: activities, strategies, or outcomes that we wish to pursue in achieving our goals. The infusion of new resources will determine whether we can move in these directions.

## **Artistic Creativity** and Preservation

To encourage and support artistic creativity and preserve our diverse cultural heritage

#### INTRODUCTION

There has never been a better time – nor a more urgent need – for arts organizations, artists, teachers, business, and civic leaders to work together to acquaint Americans with the best of their rich and diverse cultural heritage. America's art is beautiful and inspiring; worthy of experiencing – and preserving for future generations. While most would agree with these observations, we know that creativity – like any other human endeavor – cannot flourish without sustenance.

#### **CURRENT FOCUS**

As the enabling legislation for the Arts and Humanities Endowments states, "... It is necessary and appropriate for the Federal Government to help create and sustain not only a climate encouraging freedom of thought, imagination, and inquiry but also the material conditions facilitating the release of this creative talent." The legislation goes on to say, "It is vital to a democracy to honor and preserve its multicultural artistic heritage as well as support new ideas...."

We fulfill this mandate largely by supporting projects that provide opportunities for artists to create and refine work, and opportunities to present artistic works of all cultures and periods, preserve significant works of art and cultural traditions, and enhance the capacity or effectiveness of arts organizations. By targeting our efforts in this way, we consciously seek to support the entire cycle of creation, preservation and renewal, consistent with our charge. Among the types of projects that we support are those, as reflected in the Agency's enabling legislation, that:

- Have substantial national or international artistic and cultural significance, giving emphasis to American creativity and cultural diversity and to the maintenance and encouragement of professional excellence; and
- Help arts organizations develop.

#### **INTENDED OUTCOMES**

The Arts Endowment has identified three outcomes it intends to achieve through its Artistic Creativity and Preservation activity:

- 1. Artists and arts organizations have opportunities to create, interpret, present, and perform artistic work.
- 2. Artistic works and cultural traditions are preserved.
- 3. Organizations enhance their ability to realize their artistic and public service goals.

These outcomes will be addressed through Agency-funded grant projects and activities with arts organizations, arts service organizations, units of government, individuals, and other nonprofit organizations involved in arts activities.

#### ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

Achieving the Artistic Creativity and Preservation outcomes requires multiple strategies and resources.

## 1. Establishing a comprehensive approach to the Agency's management of Artistic Creativity and Preservation.

- Establishing Artistic Creativity and Preservation as a separate goal with designated funding.
  - The importance of this area to the Agency is elevated when identified as a separate goal and funding area.
- Consolidating the Agency's presentation of its various creativity, preservation, and organizational capacity-building activities into one program announcement.
  - By combining these activities into one comprehensive program announcement and revising its guidelines accordingly, the Arts Endowment makes clear the interplay of creativity, preservation, and organizational capacity.

#### 2. Requiring applicants to identify outcomes and measures of success.

All Artistic Creativity and Preservation applicants will be required to identify the outcome they intend to achieve, as well as focused measures (or indicators) of success, and will report results in their final grant reports. Examples of projects and activities that the Arts Endowment believes will support its Artistic Creativity and Preservation outcomes include:

- Opportunities for artists to create and refine work, within one or across several art forms or disciplines.
- Public presentation, exhibition, performance, or publication of high quality artistic works and art forms that reflect our Nation's diverse cultural traditions.
- Artistic development for professional artists, and training and professional development for arts administrators.
- Apprenticeships and related art instruction.
- Documentation, recording, or preservation activities.
- Recognition of artists for their contributions to our Nation's cultural heritage.

- Technical assistance to help arts organizations plan effectively for the future, including leadership transition.
- Development of new or adaptation of existing technology to help improve the operations of arts organizations, to enhance an organization's impact, and/or to enhance the experience of audience members with special needs.
- 3. Leadership Initiatives. In addition to basic grantmaking programs and activities, the Arts Endowment considers special leadership projects or activities that specifically address an Agency goal and outcome. For six years the Arts Endowment has supported, through Meet the Composer, Inc., *Commissioning Music/USA*, a program that engages consortia of music organizations in the commissioning of new American works. This initiative, which receives matching funds from a number of private foundations and other funding sources, provides creative opportunities for emerging composers, promotes wider knowledge and appreciation of contemporary American works, and encourages organizations to work together to strengthen the American musical repertoire across all genres. With this project, the Arts Endowment is supporting artistic creativity, the preservation of our cultural heritage, and the ability of arts organizations to fulfill their artistic and public service goals.
- 4. Convening, Conducting Research, and Issuing Publications. Convening leaders in the field, conducting research, and issuing publications have always been central to the Arts Endowment's efforts. For example, the Arts Endowment is currently supporting research for a publication expected to be released during Fiscal Year 2003 that will survey trends in the nonprofit dance world based on analysis of three newly available data sets: NEA Dance applicant data, the 2000 Unified Database of Arts Organizations, and the 1987, 1992, and 1997 Economic Census. This research and its related publication are expected to shed much needed light on the financial health and prospects of the nonprofit dance field.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Throughout the period covered by this Strategic Plan, the Arts Endowment will pursue the strategies noted above. The Agency would like to pursue additional strategies in support of artistic creativity and preservation. Our ability to do so, however, will depend on the resources directly available to the Arts Endowment or on partnerships developed with public and private sector organizations. These additional interests include:

- 1. Increasing support for initiatives that strengthen the organizational and financial capability of America's nonprofit arts organizations.
- 2. Increasing opportunities for artists to create and present work.
- 3. Exploring opportunities for artists and communities to more fully engage one another through the creative process.
- 4. Expanding opportunities for the public to explore and experience our Nation's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

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To advance learning in the arts

#### INTRODUCTION

Young children enter the world with creative imaginations and artistic curiosity. This life-enhancing building block, we believe, deserves the same attention and cultivation as the building blocks of math, science, reading, and language. The Arts Endowment maintains that all children, not only those with special artistic talent, deserve an education in the arts, one that enables them to create, perform, and communicate in and through artistic media. This perspective was most recently reinforced when President Bush signed the "No Child Left Behind Act." With this Act, the President and the Congress affirmed that the arts are a core academic subject.

Recent studies increasingly point to the connections between learning in the arts and cognitive and language development. They also suggest that learning in the arts has a positive effect on young people's confidence, motivation to succeed, preparation for work, and interpersonal skills. Arts learning activities prepare students for careers — whether in the arts or elsewhere. Talent can be identified and nurtured in the artists of the future, and non-artists can apply skills acquired through arts learning — such as decision-making, problem solving, and teamwork — to non-arts careers. Young people who learn about and participate in the arts will also become the knowledgeable and engaged audiences of the future. Learning in the arts prepares youngsters not only for life, but for a life enriched by the arts.

#### **CURRENT FOCUS**

In its enabling legislation, the National Endowment for the Arts was charged to:

- Increase accessibility to the arts through providing education to all Americans, including diverse cultures and urban and rural populations, by encouraging and developing quality education in the arts at all levels;
- Develop and stimulate research to teach quality education in the arts; and
- Encourage and facilitate the work of artists, arts institutions, and Federal, State, regional, and local agencies in the area of education in the arts.

The Arts Endowment regards lifelong learning in the arts as extremely important to the cultural and economic vitality of the Nation and, therefore, a high priority for its grantmaking and leadership activities over the long term. The current focus on children and youth in the Arts Endowment's Learning in the Arts goal reflects resource limitations rather than a tenuous commitment to learning in the arts for Americans of all ages.

Under the Access to the Arts goal, the Agency is able to fund a limited number of projects that feature arts learning for adults and multigenerational groups.

Today, through its support of projects, leadership initiatives, and partnership efforts under the Learning in the Arts goal, the Arts Endowment plays a critical role in helping children and youth acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding of the arts. The Agency funds projects that provide hands-on learning and engagement of learners with skilled artists and quality art in early childhood, school-based, and community settings. The Arts Endowment also promotes the recognition and cultivation of best practices and exemplary research that explores the effect of arts learning on the cognitive development of children.

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES

The Arts Endowment has identified three outcomes it intends to achieve through its Learning in the Arts activity:

- 1. Children and youth demonstrate skills, knowledge, and/or understanding of the arts.
- 2. Teachers, artists, and others demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to engage children and youth in arts learning.
- 3. National, State, and local entities demonstrate a commitment to arts learning for children and youth.

These outcomes will be addressed through Agency-funded grant projects and activities with arts organizations, arts service organizations, educational institutions, units of government, and other nonprofit organizations involved in arts and arts learning activities.

#### **ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES**

Achievement of the Learning in the Arts outcomes demands new focus and multiple strategies and resources.

- 1. Establishing a comprehensive approach to the Agency's management of Learning in the Arts. This involves three significant changes:
  - Establishing Learning in the Arts as a separate goal with designated funding.
    - The importance of this area to the Agency is elevated when identified as a separate goal and funding area. Further, the allocation for

Learning in the Arts will include funds for leadership initiatives such as research, evaluation, and convening.

- Establishing an Agency office more directly focused on Learning in the Arts.
  - This will provide for comprehensive management of the Agency's Learning in the Arts activity.
- Consolidating the Agency's various arts learning activities.
  - The Agency has consolidated separate arts learning activities into one comprehensive program, and has revised its guidelines to focus on early childhood, school-based, and community-based settings for engaging children and youth through Learning in the Arts.
- 2. Requiring applicants to identify outcomes and measures of success. Learning in the Arts applicants will be required to identify specific outcomes they intend to achieve, as well as focused measures (or indicators) of success, and will report results in their final grant reports. Examples of projects and activities that the Arts Endowment believes will support its Learning in the Arts outcomes include:

Early Childhood	School-Based	Community-Based	Early, School, or Community-Based
Programs providing regularly scheduled, developmentally appropriate arts learning activities by qualified teachers or artists.	Programs that engage children/youth over an extended period to increase their proficiency in and understanding of an arts discipline, genre, or form. Programs must be consistent with arts education standards or curricular frameworks.	Programs in which artists or arts organizations provide lessons or courses in the arts that have explicit learning objectives.	Professional development for teachers, artists, and others who work in arts learning with children/youth.
Projects that stimulate the imagination by direct participation with artists and the arts.	Collaborations between teachers and artists to incorporate the arts into planning and instruction.	Projects that provide educational components in conjunction with performances, exhibitions, or demonstrations.	Research on the educational impact of the arts, artists, and arts resources on our children/youth.
	Projects that explore new ways to integrate learning in the arts with learning in other subjects.	Artists' residencies that directly engage participants with artists and the arts.	Evaluation, documentation, and dissemination of promising or proven arts learning programs and practices.

- **3. Leadership Initiatives.** In addition to basic grantmaking programs and activities, the Arts Endowment considers special leadership projects or activities that specifically address an Agency goal and outcome. For example, *Arts for Learning (A4L)*, an initiative led by Young Audiences, Inc., in collaboration with its national network of chapters and affiliated organizations such as Opera America, the National Association for Music Education, and the National Art Education Association, is a leadership initiative that advances learning in the arts. Through the Young Audiences Web site, the project will collect and provide information and tools that will assist educators in integrating the arts into education curricula.
- **4. Convening, Conducting Research, and Issuing Publications.** Convening leaders in the field, conducting research, and issuing publications have always been central to the Arts Endowment's learning in the arts efforts. Two important recent examples are:
  - On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2002, the Arts Education Partnership, supported by the Arts Endowment and the U.S. Department of Education, released *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, a compendium of research in arts learning. This compendium contains 62 studies that review the critical links between learning in the arts, academic and social skills, and motivations in the following areas:
    - > Reading and language development
    - ➤ Mathematics
    - > Fundamental cognitive skills and capacities
    - ➤ Motivations to learn
    - > Effective social behavior
    - > School environment
  - On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2002, the National Governors Association, through a cooperative agreement with the Arts Endowment, issued *The Impact of Arts Education on Workforce Preparation*. The report provides examples of how arts-based education can enhance communication and higher-order thinking skills, increase academic success, and lower the incidence of iuvenile crime.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Throughout the period covered by this Strategic Plan, the Arts Endowment will pursue the strategies noted above. In addition, the Agency is interested in pursuing the strategies listed below. The ability to address them will depend on the resources directly available to the Arts Endowment and on partnerships developed with public and private sector organizations.

- 1. Extending the Agency's learning in the arts programming to reach individuals of all ages, addressing lifelong learning in the arts.
- 2. Expanding the number of children and youth benefiting from learning in the arts and the number of teachers, artists, and others working with children and youth that receive professional development related to learning in the arts.
- 3. Supporting model learning in the arts programs over an extended period of time, providing opportunities for ongoing examinations of the impact of the arts on the academic and social development of children and youth.
- 4. Undertaking research studies such as:
  - > longitudinal studies that follow students over an extended period of time to determine the impact of learning in the arts.
  - > studies that assess the impact of learning in the arts on older adults.
  - > studies that examine the impact of learning in the arts on special populations of students, including students in disadvantaged economic circumstances.
- 5. Improving the dissemination of results of learning in the arts studies, evaluations, and model programs.
- 6. Exploring the feasibility of requiring the use of National standards in various learning in the arts projects and activities.
- 7. Developing or modifying programs in response to what is learned from research studies and program evaluations.

### Access to the Arts

To make the arts more widely available in communities throughout the country

#### INTRODUCTION

It is a widely held belief that the arts contribute significantly to the quality of community and individual life. Every measure of "livability" – such as *Money* magazine's regular survey of the best places to live in America<sup>1</sup> – includes the arts as a key criterion. Clearly, a desirable place to live is one in which creativity is valued and encouraged, artists find outlets for their talent, and the arts are central to a rich and vibrant community life.

The importance of the arts to communities can also be seen in economic terms according to *Arts & Economic Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations and Their Audiences.* This recently released publication, which presents the results of a study conducted by Americans for the Arts with support from the Arts Endowment, highlights the positive impact of the arts on the Nation's economy.

To fully realize these benefits, individuals – regardless of where they live – should have opportunities to be engaged by the arts, and arts organizations and artists should have opportunities to extend their reach.

#### **CURRENT FOCUS**

In its enabling legislation, the National Endowment for the Arts was charged with supporting projects that:

- Are of significant merit and which, without such assistance, would otherwise be unavailable to our citizens for geographic or economic reasons;
- Will encourage and assist artists and enable them to achieve wider distribution of their works;
- Have substantial artistic and cultural significance and that reach, or reflect the culture of, a minority, inner city, rural, or tribal community; and
- Will encourage and develop the appreciation and enjoyment of the arts by our citizens.

Either directly through grants or indirectly through grantees' outreach activities, the Arts Endowment supports the arts and culture in American cities and towns of every size. Every year, the lives of millions of people throughout the Nation are touched by performances, exhibitions, broadcasts, and educational and community activities funded

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Money magazine website, June 28, 2002.

by the Arts Endowment. In Fiscal Year 2001 alone, Arts Endowment grants directly and indirectly supported arts activities in approximately 3,900 different communities.

Despite this progress, much remains to be done to ensure that everyone in the United States has opportunities to experience the rich diversity of our Nation's artistic accomplishments. Through our Access to the Arts goal, we seek to broaden access to the excellence and diversity of the arts – from concerts and art exhibitions in the parks to ballet, theater, and symphony in performing arts halls. This is achieved largely through the Challenge America program, which supports projects that provide opportunities for people to experience and participate in a wide range of art forms and activities, that enable arts organizations and artists to expand and diversify their audiences, that extend the arts to underserved populations – those whose opportunities to experience the arts may be limited by geography, economic conditions, ethnic background, or disability – and that strengthen communities through access to the arts.

A particularly important Access to the Arts initiative is the Arts on Radio and Television. Through this activity, the Arts Endowment supports the development, production, and national distribution of radio and television programs on the arts that regularly reach millions of people of all ages throughout the United States.

#### **INTENDED OUTCOMES**

The Arts Endowment has identified three outcomes it intends to achieve through its Access to the Arts activity.

- 1. Audiences throughout the Nation have opportunities to experience a wide range of art forms and activities.
- 2. Artists and arts organizations expand and diversify their audiences.
- 3. The arts contribute to the strengthening of communities.

These outcomes will be addressed through Agency-funded grant projects and activities with arts organizations, arts service organizations, educational institutions, units of government, and other nonprofit organizations involved in arts and access activities.

#### ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES

Achievement of the Access to the Arts outcomes requires multiple strategies and resources.

- 1. Establishing a comprehensive approach to the Agency's management of Access to the Arts. This involves five significant changes:
  - Establishing Access to the Arts as a separate goal with designated funding.
    - o The importance of this area to the Agency is elevated when identified as a separate goal and funding area. Further, the allocation for Access to the Arts will include funds for targeted leadership initiatives that make the arts more widely available to the American people.
  - Refocusing the Challenge America program on Access to the Arts.
  - Establishing an Agency office more directly focused on Access to the Arts.
    - This will provide for comprehensive management for the majority of the Agency's Access to the Arts activity.
  - Consolidating the majority of the Agency's Access to the Arts activities into one program.
    - The Agency has consolidated grants given for access-related projects from Grants to Organizations into grants given under the Challenge America program, thus providing for a comprehensive approach to the Arts Endowment's support of access.
  - Complementing the Challenge America program through expanded support for the arts on radio and television an essential tool in providing quality arts programming to Americans nationwide.
- 2. Requiring applicants to identify outcomes and measures of success. All Access to the Arts applicants will be required to identify the outcome they intend to achieve, as well as focused measures (or indicators) of success, and will report results in their final grant reports. Examples of projects that the Arts Endowment believes will support its Access to the Arts outcomes include:
  - Exhibitions, performances, distribution of artistic work, and other activities, such as touring, which provide public access to a diverse range of art in a variety of settings.
  - Outreach projects that involve diverse communities and reach new audiences.
  - Nationally distributed television and radio programs.
  - Innovative uses of technology to enhance public access to the arts.
  - Educational activities in the arts (not for academic credit) that are offered primarily to adults or groups of all ages.
  - Projects that focus on the arts as a key component of community development.
- **3.** Leadership Initiatives. In addition to basic grantmaking programs and activities, the Arts Endowment considers special leadership projects or activities that specifically address an Agency goal and outcome. One example is a cooperative agreement with Chamber Music America to provide, during a four-year period, innovative chamber music ensemble residencies in non-urban and underserved

communities across the country. Each residency will be designed in collaboration with a community partner, such as presenters, producers, festivals, schools, libraries, museums, and other community institutions, to raise awareness of chamber music, enhance an existing program, or address an identified need in the community.

**4. Convening, Conducting Research, and Issuing Publications.** Convening leaders in the field, conducting research, and issuing publications have always been central to the Arts Endowment's efforts, and will remain so. Every five years the Arts Endowment conducts its *Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*, which provides data that is critical to our understanding of the role of the arts in individual and community life, and that guides our thinking about future policy and program directions.

An example of our convening activity is a recent conference co-sponsored by the Arts Endowment and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). "Building Creative Economies: The Arts, Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development in Appalachia" brought together more than 300 participants to discuss the relationships among the arts, regional identity, and economic development, to share success stories, and to develop State action plans. To continue building momentum, the Arts Endowment and ARC are discussing follow-up activities, including an e-commerce initiative, cultural heritage tourism development workshops, and a publication that will summarize the conference proceedings and elaborate on the important issues raised.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Throughout the period of time covered by this Strategic Plan, the Arts Endowment will pursue the strategies noted above. In addition, the Agency has the interests outlined below. The ability to address them will depend on the resources directly available to the Arts Endowment and on partnerships developed with public and private sector organizations.

- 1. Enhancing the Arts Endowment's existing Regional Touring Program, which provides opportunities for audiences in rural and isolated communities to experience the live performing arts.
- 2. Establishing a discipline-based National Touring Project as a focused extension of the Regional Touring Program that will concentrate on mid-sized and smaller communities.
- 3. Engaging older adults in the arts, both as creators and as audience, in response to documented evidence of the health and cognitive benefits that participation in the arts has on the quality of life for older Americans.
- 4. Expanding the Agency's Arts on Radio and Television initiative.



To develop and maintain partnerships that advance the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts

#### INTRODUCTION

The Partnerships in the Arts goal differs from the previous three programmatic goals because it focuses on a particular mechanism or approach for extending the Agency's reach and impact. It is a reflection, too, of the vision for the Arts Endowment in 1965. Congress, in its declaration of purpose for the Arts and Humanities Endowments, stated:

The encouragement and support of national progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts, while primarily a matter for private and local initiative, are also appropriate matters of concern to the Federal Government.

The Agency's founders recognized the Arts Endowment's role as a catalyst to enrich the life of the Nation. There are three significant demonstrations of this intent in the Agency's authorizing legislation:

- 1. The requirement that Arts Endowment grants be matched with non-Federal funds on at least a 1:1 basis
- 2. The authorization to make grants to non-profit organizations, making clear that the Agency was to accomplish its mission in part through other entities.
- 3. The emphasis placed on working in partnership with the States, and the Congressional mandate that the States would receive a guaranteed percentage of the Agency's funds. Today that figure is approximately 40 percent.

The very nature of the Arts Endowment's structure, then, recognizes that partnerships are essential to achieving the Agency's mission. Since 1965, the Arts Endowment's leadership has contributed to a significant expansion in both the number of arts organizations and the range of arts experiences available to the American people.

The Arts Endowment promotes collaborations among arts organizations, the various arts disciplines, and communities. It also advances its mission through partnerships with other Federal agencies, units of State and local government, and a range of non-governmental organizations, including national arts service groups, international organizations, and commercial enterprises. Partnerships become increasingly important in a climate of limited resources.

#### **INTENDED OUTCOMES**

While the concept of partnership infuses all that the Agency does, establishing Partnerships for the Arts as a specific goal underscores that partnerships, as a way of doing business, make certain achievements attainable that would not otherwise be possible. The Arts Endowment has identified three specific outcomes that it intends to achieve with its Partnerships for the Arts activities:

- 1. State arts agencies and regional arts organizations enable the Arts Endowment to make the arts available in more communities than it could directly.
- 2. State arts agencies, regional arts organizations, and the Arts Endowment work together to achieve common or complementary goals.
- 3. Other public and private sector organizations support arts activities that advance the mission of the Arts Endowment.
- 1. Partnerships with the State arts agencies and their regional arts organizations contribute significantly to the Arts Endowment's ability to broaden access to the arts in communities throughout the country. We require these partners to submit strategic and operating plans on a regular basis that clearly explain their goals, programs, and intended outcomes; these plans are reviewed by panels of experts convened by the Arts Endowment. This process, along with ongoing consultations among the parties, ensures that Arts Endowment funds awarded to the State arts agencies and their regional organizations are used to support goals, activities, and outcomes that complement those of the Arts Endowment

Over the years, these agencies have shown extraordinary leadership by, for example:

- Encouraging cultural diversity and support for the traditional arts.
- Collaborating with a wide array of public agencies and private organizations to advance learning in the arts, including school districts, State departments of education, colleges and universities, and local and regional coalitions of the arts, education, and business sectors.
- Providing access to the arts through programs such as the Regional Touring Program, which provides rural and underserved populations with access to quality performing arts programming.

In addition to the programmatic activities made possible through the Federal/State partnership, we have successfully addressed significant policy issues. For instance, the Arts Endowment and the State arts agencies jointly developed a National Standard for Arts Information Exchange, an important data tool used by public arts agencies to organize and report information about their constituents and arts-related grantmaking activities.

2. Partnerships with Other Federal Agencies. The Arts Endowment partners with other Federal agencies on projects and activities that address matters of mutual interest. These arrangements support the accomplishment of the Arts Endowment's mission in two ways. With some, other Federal agencies add their resources to the Arts Endowment's limited resources, thereby allowing the Arts Endowment to do more than it could on its own. In other cases, the Arts Endowment is able to use its expertise to assist other Federal agencies with their arts-related activities.

For example, the Arts Endowment is currently engaged in a partnership with a number of Federal agencies and the National Trust for Historic Preservation to support the Heritage Tourism Program, managed by the Trust to assist communities in attracting more visitors to quality arts experiences.

Another example is the cooperation between the Arts Endowment and the Department of Education, a partnership that is longstanding and particularly important. In response to the Goals 2000 Educate America Act of 1994, which listed the arts among the core subjects to be taught, the Arts Endowment partnered with the Department of Education to form the Arts Education Partnership (see #3 below.) The "No Child Left Behind Act," signed by President Bush in January 2002, included among its stated purposes:

- To support systematic education reform by strengthening arts education as an integral part of the elementary and secondary school curricula.
- To support the national effort to enable all students to demonstrate competence in the arts.

In another initiative, the Arts Endowment and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service support arts projects in forest and/or natural resource dependent rural communities. In the first five years of this Arts and Rural Community Assistance Initiative, the NEA-FS partnership has awarded \$1.5 million through more than 100 grants for projects by arts councils, museums, performing arts groups, schools, and Native American tribes. The projects have included many art forms – drama, ballet, photography, film, creative writing, folk and traditional arts – and have demonstrated the value of the arts in rural economic diversification and the celebration of rural culture.

3. Partnerships with the Private Sector. The Arts Endowment's most significant partnership with the private sector is defined by the grant-matching requirement for the majority of the Agency's grants. Another example is the Arts Education Partnership, formed in 1995 by the Arts Endowment, the Department of Education, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The Partnership comprises a consortium of more than 140 national organizations from the arts, education, business, and government sectors that work with a variety of State and local partners to improve arts education throughout the country.

#### **ACHIEVEMENT OF OUTCOMES**

Achievement of the Partnerships for the Arts outcomes requires the following strategies:

- 1. Establishing an Agency office more directly focused on Partnerships for the Arts. This will provide for integrated management and evaluation of the majority of the Agency's public and private partnership activities. The Arts Endowment has been moving in this direction for several years; that process will be completed during the period covered by this plan.
- 2. Convening, Conducting Research, and Issuing Publications. Convening leaders in the field, conducting research, and issuing publications have always been central to the Arts Endowment's efforts, and provide unique opportunities both for building the relationships that lead to future collaborations, and accomplishing specific objectives that support the Agency's mission.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Throughout the period of time covered by this Strategic Plan, the Arts Endowment will pursue the strategies noted above. In addition, the Agency has the interests listed below. The ability to address them will depend on the resources directly available to the Arts Endowment and on partnerships developed with public and private organizations.

- 1. Convening discussions about issues of mutual concern with the State arts agencies and regional arts organizations.
- 2. Expanding opportunities for mutual cultural exchange through international partnerships.
- 3. Exploring new partnerships with Federal agencies.
- 4. Exploring new partnerships with commercial and other private sector enterprises.

# Management

In conjunction with the development of this revised Strategic Plan, considerable attention was devoted to management issues because effective strategic planning includes a review of the business processes, resources, and capacity required to achieve desired plans and goals. Relying upon the President's management initiatives and related guidance from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management, the Arts Endowment undertook an in-depth review of its management activities and concluded that:

- 1. We needed a new management goal that recognized the relationship between management activities and achievement of the Agency's mission.
- 2. We needed to identify actions we could take to improve services provided to the public.
- 3. We needed a review of our internal operations to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of operations.
- 4. Direct attention to human capital is essential in all management initiatives.
- 5. The relationship between budget and performance should be improved.
- 6. We needed to review our organizational structure to ensure that it is aligned with the Agency's goals, facilitates communication with the public, provides for effective and efficient operations, and is cost-effective.
- 7. We needed to adjust our workload in light of available resources.

Each of these conclusions is discussed below.

1. Management Goal. The Arts Endowment is committed to serving the American people through the fair and responsible awarding of grants, contracts, and leadership initiatives. Through sound business practices, effective and responsible use of resources, and innovative and dynamic leadership, the Agency achieves high performance and accountability. As such, the management goal is:

To enable the Arts Endowment to achieve its mission through effective, efficient, and responsible management of resources.

- **2. Improving Service to the Public.** While there are many ways in which the Arts Endowment continually interacts with the public, the following are the most important relative to the application and grant process:
  - Issuing application guidelines and responding to applicant questions.

- Securing the service of citizen experts for application review.
- Notifying applicants of Agency decisions in a timely manner.
- Responding to grantee questions or requests pursuant to grantees' compliance with grant terms and conditions.
- Convening and attending meetings, undertaking research and data collection, issuing publications, and providing relevant information to the public.

To improve service in these areas, the Arts Endowment will:

- Explore modifications to its application guidelines that remove unnecessary requirements and confusing restrictions.
- Continue to ensure broad representation on its application review panels.
- Pursue the use of technology as a vehicle to improve application and grant processing including application submission, notification to applicants of Agency decisions, and grant administration such as submission of final reports. To this end, we actively participate in government-wide efforts to streamline grantmaking and to implement e-grants.
- Improve the Agency's website to ensure ease of use and increased access to information.
- 3. Improving Overall Operations. As a grantmaking agency, the Arts Endowment is challenged not only to manage resources efficiently and effectively but also to ensure that the results of its decision making benefit the public and achieve the mission of the Agency. It requires considerable expertise, attention to process, and information gathering to adjudicate fairly the thousands of requests for funding that the Arts Endowment receives annually from America's diverse communities.

The Arts Endowment continually evaluates its business practices, which produces efficiencies. However, with the desire to infuse technology more fully into the Agency's operations and given the available resources, the Arts Endowment has undertaken a formal Business Process Review. Relying upon private sector expertise, the Arts Endowment will acquire a detailed documentation of Agency operations, including recommendations for operations and system improvements. Subsequently, those improvements determined to be appropriate and feasible will be implemented directly by the Arts Endowment. Implementation of those

improvements that necessitate use of technology will require private sector assistance. In addition, the Arts Endowment will identify opportunities to automate more fully its financial management operations. This, we believe, is an important element of operational improvement.

- **4. Attention to Human Capital.** The Arts Endowment has always focused on human capital; however, at a time when resources are limited, a new examination of human capital is warranted. The Agency intends to develop a Human Capital Plan that, among other things, will focus on the need to ensure that:
  - Employee skills align with position requirements.
  - Staff receive desired and relevant training.
  - Critical vacancies are filled as quickly as possible.
  - Employees have opportunities to participate in work and family-friendly programs.
  - Incentive programs are appropriately used to recognize and motivate performance.
- **5. Budget/Performance Integration.** The public demands and deserves clarity of purpose and evidence of achievement. Fulfilling these demands requires a well-established approach to assessing programs and use of that assessment to determine priorities. The Arts Endowment is taking two important actions to integrate budget and performance.
  - Outcomes have been developed for all program areas outcomes that we believe are appropriate for the specialized work of the Arts Endowment.
  - The Arts Endowment intends to establish a program evaluation function that will annually assess Agency program activity, document accomplishments, and identify opportunities for improvement.
- **6. Organizational Structure.** The integration of planning, process, and budget necessitates a review of the availability and allocation of resources necessary to achieve desired goals. The Arts Endowment has initiated such a review and has made some preliminary findings. These findings will be further examined over the coming year and adjustments made as appropriate. Some of these preliminary findings are noted below. Note that some of the findings can be acted on in a relatively short time frame; others will take longer.

- Organizational structure should be clearly aligned with the Agency's Strategic Plan and goals.
- Organizational reporting and working relationships should be reviewed to improve Agency effectiveness and increase flexibility in the management of work.
- Given existing resources, reduction in the number of established positions is necessary.
- Allocation of resources should be examined to determine the most efficient use of human and financial resources.
- It is desirable to establish entry-level positions with improved career development opportunities.
- 7. Agency Workload. Subsequent to an approximately 40% reduction in Agency funds and staffing in FY 1996, the Arts Endowment recognized that available staff and resources could not handle previous application and grant workloads. Estimates of a manageable workload based on previous patterns and staffing ratios were 2,000 3,000 applications and 700 900 grants annually. In FY 1997, the Agency received almost 3,300 applications and awarded roughly 1,100 grants. The staff totaled approximately 150. By FY 2002, the number of applications had increased by nearly 70% to 5,600, and the number of grants had increased by almost 100% to approximately 2,200 while staffing remained level. The Agency projects that the number of applications received and grants awarded will continue to rise unless something is done to control those increases.

Efficiencies in process and realignment alone cannot address the growing imbalance between workload and staffing. To address this imbalance, the Agency intends to examine its grantmaking programs and activities and identify opportunities to adjust eligibility requirements – with the intent of reducing the number of applications received and grants awarded commensurate with the available financial and human resources. Concurrent with this effort, the Agency will be mindful of its commitment to ensure broad geographic reach of its grantmaking.

The Arts Endowment sees opportunities for improvement. Addressing the management issues identified above will improve the Agency's interaction with the public, its operational effectiveness and efficiency, and its program performance.

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# Performance Plan and Budget

## **BUDGETING FOR RESULTS**

### **General and Performance Goal Relationships**

The goals contained in the Strategic Plan provide a framework for Agency activity over a six-year period. Implementation of this plan on an annual basis is reflected in the annual Performance Plans. The results of this implementation will be evaluated to determine the accomplishments and impact of the Agency's programs and activities. The closer the relationship between the Strategic goals and the Performance goals, the clearer the ability to gauge achievements. With this in mind, the Arts Endowment has determined that the goals contained in its annual Performance Plans will be identical to those contained in its Strategic Plan.

### **Relationship of Goals to Budget**

The importance of relying upon Strategic Plan goals as a basis for Agency activity is such that the Arts Endowment has established direct linkages between the Agency's Strategic Plan and Budget. Specifically, the annual budget requests to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress will present the budget and make requests according to the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.

# KEY FACTORS

The Arts Endowment has identified a number of key factors that may influence achievement of the Strategic Plan goals.

- 1. Applicant Discretion. Eligible applicants to the Arts Endowment have full discretion as to the goal under which they seek support and as to the nature of their planned projects. The Agency issues guidelines that are used by organizations to submit applications. The guidelines identify areas of funding that directly relate to each of the Agency's goals, and they broadly address the types of eligible projects. While there tend to be historical and fairly consistent application patterns, from year to year applicant interests may change from one area to another and from one type of project to another. This discretion on the part of applicants reflects their choices and determinations; the funding decisions reflect Agency judgments.
- 2. Outcomes. Beginning with applications for Fiscal Year 2004 support, the Arts Endowment will require all applicants seeking project support to identify the Arts Endowment's outcomes they intend to achieve as well as the performance indicators they intend to use to evaluate success. This will be the first time the

Arts Endowment has extended this requirement to all of its major funding activities.

- **3.** Partnerships with the States. The Arts Endowment works in partnership with the designated State arts agencies and their regional arts organizations in support of the arts throughout the Nation. Changes in the States' financial commitment affects this delivery system.
- 4. Learning in the Arts Landscape. Learning in the Arts has become an increasingly important component of the Arts Endowment's endeavors. Critical to this effort has been the belief that engaging children and youth in the arts results in cognitive and social development. Considerable research has been conducted that confirms these relationships. The Arts Endowment intends to explore opportunities for a more in-depth examination of them. Results of this research and evaluation may influence future Agency programming and requests for funding.
- 5. Private Sector Giving. The combined appropriations of the Arts Endowment and State arts agencies make up a fraction of the total cost of the non-profit arts sector in the Nation. Foundation, corporate, and individual donors are essential to maintaining a vibrant arts environment. Significant changes in investment portfolios and funding priorities of these donors affect the arts in general, and may affect the Arts Endowment's grantmaking given that Arts Endowment grants generally require a minimum one-to-one match from non-Federal sources.

# **Program Evaluation**

Historically, the Arts Endowment has employed a variety of approaches to evaluate or assess program accomplishments. For example, we have relied upon:

- Advisory panels to assess the merits of grant applications, and to participate in policy discussions that help assess Agency effectiveness and guide future strategies. These citizen panels are composed of artists, arts professionals, and lay people who are knowledgeable about the arts.
- Review of grant final reports to assess the impact and reach of each grant, and to determine whether projects have been carried out consistent with the stated grant purpose and original project description.
- **Targeted research** to develop information necessary to inform policy. These efforts include examining demographic information on public participation in the arts and studying the effects of cultural activity on the economy.
- **Issue-oriented convening** to inform program and policy development. Issues addressed may focus, for example, on a specific discipline or opportunities for public-private partnerships.

The Agency has now decided to establish a routine assessment process intended to determine how effective Agency grant programs are in achieving Arts Endowment programmatic goals and outcomes. Elements of the planned assessments include:

- 1. Relying on appropriate sampling;
- 2. Using government and private sector expert reviewers;
- 3. Considering various types of projects, as well as arts disciplines supported;
- 4. Undertaking assessments annually;
- 5. Reporting results in Agency Performance Plan and budget submissions.

Specifics are still under development and will be reflected in updated Strategic and Performance Plans.

# **Cross-Cutting Programs**

One of the strategies the Arts Endowment employs to achieve its programmatic goals is to undertake arrangements with other Federal agencies. This strategy has required relatively little resources of the Agency; however, it has revealed increased potential of the arts. Other Federal agencies have come to realize that inclusion of the arts in their programs often results in accomplishments not likely without the arts. For example, the Arts Endowment is working with the:

- Environmental Protection Agency to address brownfields and sprawl, and
- Department of Agriculture to address rural community economic development issues.

The Arts Endowment will continue to work with other Federal agencies to address areas of mutual interest.

# Conclusion

In the past year the National Endowment for the Arts has taken important steps to redefine its vision, mission, strategic goals, and outcomes. The Arts Endowment's Strategic Plan for 2003-2008 is the result of this process.

The arts are essential to expressing our joys and sorrows, our values and beliefs, and our yearnings for a better society. Through music and dance, drama and design, painting and poetry, we affirm who we are and who we wish to become. Public support for the arts enriches our Nation by extending the reach of the arts; advancing learning in the arts for children, youth, and older Americans; and encouraging artistic creativity and preservation. As a small but well-run Agency with a clearly defined set of goals, the National Endowment for the Arts raises its voice to articulate the importance of the arts in enriching the lives of our citizens.

# Summary of Strategic Plan Goals and Outcomes

# **Goals**

Artistic Creativity and Preservation	Learning in the Arts	Access to the Arts	Partnerships for the Arts
To encourage and support artistic creativity and preserve our diverse cultural heritage.	To advance learning in the arts.	To make the arts more widely available in communities throughout the country.	To develop and maintain partnerships that advance the mission of the National Endowment for the Arts.

# Outcomes \*

	Outco		
1. Artists and arts	1. Children and youth	1. Audiences	1. State arts agencies
organizations have	demonstrate skills,	throughout the Nation	and regional arts
	knowledge, and/or	have opportunities to	organizations enable the
interpret, present, and	understanding of the	experience a wide	Arts Endowment to
perform artistic work.	arts.	range of art forms	make the arts available
		and activities.	in more communities
			than it could directly.
2. Artistic works and	2. Teachers, artists,	2. Artists and arts	2. State arts agencies,
cultural traditions are	and others demonstrate	organizations expand	regional arts
preserved.	knowledge and skills	and diversify their	organizations, and the
	necessary to engage	audiences.	Arts Endowment work
	children and youth in		together to achieve
	arts learning.		common or
			complementary goals.
3. Organizations	3. National, State, and	3. The arts contribute	<ol><li>Other public and</li></ol>
enhance their ability to	local entities	to the strengthening of	private sector
realize their artistic and	demonstrate a	communities.	organizations support
public service goals.	commitment to arts		arts activities that
	learning for children		advance the mission of
	and youth.		the Arts Endowment.

<sup>\*</sup> NOTE: These outcomes refer to the intended results of Agency-funded grant projects and activities with arts organizations, arts service organizations, educational institutions, units of government, individuals, and other public and private sector organizations involved in arts activities.