**FAQs**

Answers sourced from NEA website, see <https://www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/grant-program-description>. This webpage includes full grant description and links to the June 24 webinar, application instructions, and other helpful resources.

**What is the Our Town program?**

Our Town is the National Endowment for the Arts’ creative placemaking grants program. Through project-based funding, Our Town grants support projects that integrate arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities by advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes. Successful Our Town projects ultimately lay the groundwork for systemic changes that sustain the integration of arts, culture, and design into local strategies for strengthening communities. These projects require a partnership between a local government entity and nonprofit organization, one of which must be a cultural organization; and should engage in partnership with other sectors (such as agriculture and food, economic development, education and youth, environment and energy, health, housing, public safety, transportation, and workforce development). Matching grants range from $25,000 to $200,000, with a minimum cost share/match equal to the grant amount.

**What kind of projects does Our Town support?**

FY 2020 marks the 10 year anniversary of the Our Town program. The NEA is looking for projects that reflect a new and catalytic way of working, and demonstrate the potential for sustained support and recognition for arts, design, and cultural strategies as integral to every phase of community development.

The NEA encourages applications for artistically excellent projects that:

* Bring new attention to or elevate key community assets and issues, voices of residents, local history, or cultural infrastructure.
* Injectnew or additional energy, resources, activity, people, or enthusiasm into a place, community issue, or local economy.
* Envision new possibilities for a community or place - a new future, a new way of overcoming a challenge, or approaching problem-solving.
* Connect communities, people, places, and economic opportunity via physical spaces or new relationships.

The NEA plans to support a variety of projects across the country in urban, rural, and tribal communities of all sizes.

**What are the grant objectives?**

Through Our Town projects, the NEA intends to achieve the following objective: *Strengthening Communities: Provide opportunities for the arts to be integrated into the fabric of community life*.

Our Town project outcomes may include:

* **Economic Change:**Economic improvements of individuals, institutions, or the community including local business growth, job creation/labor force participation, professional development/training, prevention of displacement, in-migration, and tourism.
* **Physical Change:**Physical improvements that occur to the built and natural environment including beautification and/or enhancement of physical environment, new construction, and redevelopment (including arts, culture, and public space).
* **Social Change:**Improvements to social relationships, civic engagement and community empowerment, and/or amplifying community identity including civic engagement, collective efficacy, social capital, social cohesion, and community attachment.
* **Systems Change:** Improvements to community capacity to sustain the integration of arts, culture, and design into strategies for advancing local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes including partnerships with other sectors, civic and institutional leadership, replication or scaling of innovative projects, long term funding, training programs, and permanent staff positions.

**What is the timeline?**

June 24 Open Meeting #1, participants share ideas and make recommendations

Early July Metro will identify two recommended projects

July 17 Open Meeting #2, participants begin planning for grant applications

August 1 Metro deadline for application review

August 8 NEA deadline for submission on grants.gov

August 13-20 NEA applicant portal open for upload of application materials

April 2020 Earliest announcement of grant award

July 1, 2020 Earliest beginning date for NEA grant period

**Who is eligible to apply?**

Our Town applications require partnerships that involve at least two primary partners as defined by these guidelines: a nonprofit organization and a local governmental entity. One of the two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. Additional partners are encouraged.

One of the two primary partners must act as the official applicant (lead applicant). This lead applicant must meet the eligibility requirements, submit the application, and assume full responsibility for the grant.

Eligible lead applicants are:

* Nonprofit tax-exempt 501(c)(3) U.S. organizations with a documented three-year history of programming.
* Local governments.

All applicants must have a DUNS number ([www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com/)) and be registered with the System for Award Management**(**SAM, [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov/)) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete, and should a grant be made, throughout the life of the award. **Finalize a new or renew an existing registration in advance to** allow time to resolve any issues that may arise.

**Note: To allow time to resolve any problems you might encounter, it is strongly recommended that you register/renew your Grants.gov/SAM registration by at least July 18, 2019 and submit to Grants.gov by at least July 29, 2019.**

**What are the required partnerships for the application?**

A key to the success of creative placemaking is involving the arts in partnership with committed governmental, nonprofit, and private sector leadership. All applications must demonstrate a partnership that will provide leadership for the project. These partnerships must involve two primary partners, as defined by these guidelines:

1. Nonprofit organization
2. Local government entity

One of these two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. The highest ranking official of the local government is required to submit a formal statement of support designating the project as the one of the up to two applications being submitted for the local government.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as arts organizations and artists, design professionals and design centers, state level government agencies, foundations, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, community organizations, councils of government, rural or regional planning organizations, transportation agencies, special districts, educational organizations, as well as public and governmental entities; and should engage in partnership with other sectors (such as agriculture and food, economic development, education and youth, environment and energy, health, housing, public safety, transportation, and workforce development).

## ****Why does Louisville Metro Government select and review applications?****

Each local government -- whether applying as the lead applicant or as the primary partner with a nonprofit organization -- is limited to two applications. The local government must coordinate internally to ensure that only two applications are submitted to the NEA, rather than multiple applications through its various offices. The submitted applications must be identified as proposing the chosen projects by formal statements of support from the highest ranking official of the local government.

**Are there other resources available from the NEA?**

You may wish to apply for other NEA funding opportunities available for organizations and individuals, including Art Works, Challenge America, Research: Art Works, Creative Writing Fellowships, or Translation Projects. Visit <https://www.arts.gov/grants> for more information.