



CARES Act Arts and Cultural Provisions

May 27, 2020

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act; P.L. 116-136) was signed into law. The law includes several provisions that make supplemental appropriations to federal arts and cultural organizations. This CRS Insight provides an overview of these provisions and information, where relevant, on how arts and cultural organizations can apply for federal assistance through this funding.

In addition to the resources below, arts and cultural organizations may be eligible for funding from the Small Business Administration's [Paycheck Protection Program](#); for more information on that program, see CRS Insight IN11324, *CARES Act Assistance for Employers and Employees—The Paycheck Protection Program, Employee Retention Tax Credit, and Unemployment Insurance Benefits: Overview (Part 1)*.

Institute of Museum and Library Services

The [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) (IMLS) received \$50 million through the CARES Act, “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, including grants to States, territories and tribes to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services.” Of this total, \$30 million was distributed to states, the District of Columbia, territories, and Freely Associated States through the Grants to States program. The program used the [state allotment](#) formula to distribute this funding to State Library Administrative Agencies. Another \$15 million of the total is to be distributed through two programs: IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries (\$13.8 million) and IMLS CARES Act Grants for Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum and Library Services (\$1.2 million). Although IMLS grants usually require matching funds, the CARES Act waived those requirements for any grants made available under the law. As of May 19, 2020, the IMLS has not announced how the remaining \$5 million will be used.

Libraries may inquire about the Grants to States funding through their [State Library Administrative Agencies](#).

Application information for the [IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries](#) and the [IMLS CARES Act Grants for Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum and Library Services](#) is available from IMLS.

Congressional Research Service

<https://crsreports.congress.gov>

IN11409

National Endowment for the Arts

The [National Endowment for the Arts](#) (NEA) received \$75 million through the CARES Act “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, to be distributed in grants.” Under the law, 40%, or \$30 million, is to be distributed to [state art agencies and regional arts organizations](#) for their funding programs; 60%, or \$45 million, is to be distributed through competitive grants to eligible nonprofit organizations, including arts organizations, local arts agencies, statewide assemblies of local arts agencies, and arts service organizations. All applicants must be previous NEA award recipients from FY2017 to FY2020. Grants may be for salary support, fees for artists and contractual personnel, and/or facilities costs. Awards are to be made to impact a broad constituency, including organizations representing a wide geographic range and those serving underserved populations. Matching requirements for grants may be waived.

Arts organizations may inquire about funding through their [state and/or regional arts organization](#), and information about the [competitive grants](#) is available from the NEA.

The NEA has posted a site for [CARES Act Guidelines: Frequently Asked Questions](#).

National Endowment for the Humanities

The [National Endowment for the Humanities](#) (NEH) received \$75 million through the CARES Act “to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, to be distributed in grants.” Under the law, 40%, or \$30 million, of these funds is to be distributed to state humanities councils; 60%, or \$45 million, is to be distributed through competitive grants to at-risk humanities positions and projects. All requirements for matching grants may be waived for grants made through CARES Act funding.

Cultural organizations may inquire about funding through their [state humanities council](#), and information about the [competitive grants](#) is available from the NEH.

The NEH has posted a site for [FAQs – Funding for NEH Applicants and Grantees Impacted by the Coronavirus](#).

Appropriations for Arts and Cultural Institutions

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Kennedy Center), the Smithsonian Institution, and the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development (IAIA) are arts and cultural organizations that also received funding through the CARES Act for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) related purposes. The funding for these organizations is meant for their own operations, not for grants to other organizations.

John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

The [Kennedy Center](#) received \$25 million through the CARES Act for activities, including funding for “deep cleaning and information technology to improve telework capability and for operations and maintenance requirements related to the consequences of coronavirus.” Information on how the Kennedy Center is allocating its CARES Act funding can be found [here](#).

Smithsonian Institution

The [Smithsonian Institution](#) received \$7.5 million through the CARES Act, including funding for “deep cleaning, security, information technology, and staff overtime.” As of May 19, 2020, the Smithsonian Institution has not announced how the funds will be used.

Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development

[IAIA](#) is a public tribal college in Santa Fe, NM, that focuses on Native American art. It received \$78,000 through the CARES Act to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. As of May 19, 2020, IAIA has not announced how the funds will be used.

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