National Endowment for the Arts
FY 2006 E-Government Act Report

1. Overview of NEA's implementation of the E-Government Act

In FY 2006 NEA continued its engagement in the implementation of the E-Government Act, especially efforts to streamline and transform Federal grant-making practices. Some examples:

- Leadership. Our CIO, Mike Burke, was recently elected chair of the Grants Executive Board (GEB), which provides oversight for the Grants.gov and Grants Management Line of Business (GMLOB) initiatives. In the past year Mr. Burke also served on the GMLOB consortium leader selection committee and the GEB committee that reviewed and recommended changes to the algorithm used to determine costs to agencies for participating in Grants.gov.
- Grants.gov. The agency continues to meet all OMB-set goals for posting electronic application packages for its grant opportunities. The number of applications submitted electronically to NEA was three times the number received in FY2005.
- GMLOB. NEA declared its intention to be a GMLOB consortium member and has tentatively agreed to partner with the National Endowment for the Humanities pending their selection as a consortia lead.
- Other interagency collaborations. NEA is entering the third year of a cross-servicing agreement with DOT/FAA for financial management services and is preparing to enter into an agreement for E-Travel services and Electronic Official Personnel File (EOPF) services.
- Training. NEA IT staff recently completed advanced training in privacy protections and cyber-security.

In our last report, we highlighted how NEA is using the Internet to provide information about our Jazz Masters national initiative. This year, we want to report on one of the most popular features on our web site, *Writers' Corner*.

Over the past 40 years, the Endowment's Literature Fellowship program has awarded more than $40 million to over 2,700 writers. Sponsored work includes many of the most acclaimed novels of contemporary American literature, such as Alice Walker's *The Color*

Purple, William Kennedy's *Ironweed*, and Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country*. Through *Writers' Corner,* the public can peruse a representative sampling of these works – including novels, short stories, poems, translations, and memoirs -- and learn more about the fellowship recipients. Revised and expanded in FY2006, *Writers' Corner* now presents the work of over 150 of the nation's most outstanding writers. Visitors will also find a history of the fellowship program and even a list of films based on works by these grantees. To experience *Writers' Corner*, visit www.arts.gov/features/writers/index.html.

Like all material on NEA's web site, *Writers' Corner* is 508 compliant. For those without Internet access, information presented is also available as a publication, *NEA Literature Fellowships: 40 Years of Supporting American Writers*, which is available free to the public on request.

2. Determining what information is made available on the Internet

In consultation with NEA staff, our web master has developed priorities and schedules for making agency information available and accessible to the public on the Internet. Major priorities are summarized below:

- Priority 1 (Materials required by law, regulation or other official directive). This information includes various agency reports, its strategic plan, and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) materials described below.
- Priority 2. (Mission-critical documents essential for program operations). This information includes grant application guidelines and instructions, as well as press announcements of recently approved awards.
- Priority 3. (Frequently requested information or services). This information includes forms, e.g., post-award reporting forms, and a variety of agency publications and research reports. It also encompasses special features highlighting the work of NEA grantees, such as *Writers' Corner* (see above).

The complete listing of information publication priorities and schedules will be posted on our web site shortly.

A major content review of information on the site was conducted in 2003, utilizing both external surveys of artists, arts organizations, and arts service organizations; and internal surveys of NEA staff. Our web master continually analyzes web traffic to determine how pages are used. Feedback from the public is solicited for use in planning new features and site enhancements.

NEA's web site is fully searchable. The site currently uses the free Google search engine for direct site search, which provides results rapidly and in order of relevancy. All HTML files have the "content," "description," and "keyword" metatags; the "created," "date.reviewed," "title" and "language" metatags are being added as recommended in the *OMB Recommended Policies and Guidelines for Federal Public Web Sites*. Our web master continues to investigate techniques for web search optimization. In the future, he

would like to use a search engine that updates more immediately than the free Google engine.

3. How agency information dissemination activities are coordinated with its FOIA operations

NEA's web site includes a FOIA web page, which is maintained in coordination with the agency's FOIA Officer. This page provides FOIA and Privacy Act guidelines, describes the process by which a FOIA request is submitted, and features an "electronic reading room" of FOIA materials. A copy of the agency's FOIA Improvement Plan is posted here at www.arts.gov/about/FOIA/FOIAReview.html.

NEA typically receives fewer than 100 FOIA requests a year, the majority of which relate to sample grant applications for prospective grant applicants. Other frequently requested information relates to our annual budget, agency credit card holders, copies of administrative directives, and grants database information. In the future we plan to add examples of successful grant applications to the FOIA web page, thus reducing the number of FOIA requests for this information by allowing requestors to download it directly.

Categorization of and Access to Electronic Information

Every effort is made to ensure the public is able to use our web site to find the information they need as easily as possible. Archived electronic materials are retained locally and are made available as needed for FOIA requests.