



2014 Revisions to the National Standard for Arts Information Exchange

Approved by the NASAA Board of Directors and NEA Senior Staff

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Introduction

The National Standard for Arts Information Exchange (aka “the Standard”) is a set of terms and definitions for organizing information used by public arts agencies. For more than three decades, the Standard has offered a set of recommended parameters to inform the design of state and regional grants management databases, mailing list systems and arts resource directories. More information about the Standard can be found through [NASAA’s National Standard Reference Center](#).

Periodically, the Standard is updated to adjust to current trends and maintain its utility and relevance. The revisions process involves extensive consultation with the field as well as input from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and technical advisors. The National Standard Working Group, a task force of 14 individuals from state arts agencies (SAAs), regional arts organizations (RAOs) and the NEA and managed by NASAA, proposed revisions based on field consultations and Working Group discussions. A [revisions proposal](#) reflecting the recommendations of the Working Group was forwarded to and approved by both NEA senior staff and the NASAA board of directors in April 2014.

This document lists all approved National Standard revisions.

Note: The National Standard classifies fields as “Necessary” or “Optional.” Necessary components are important data points that every public arts agency should be able to provide for management, accountability or communications purposes. Optional components are less critical, but should be defined consistently among the agencies that elect to include them in their systems.

NEA reporting requirements—with which all states and regions *must* comply—include National Standard data elements as well as some fields unique to federal reporting requirements.

Section 1: Changes Affecting Grantee Data

1a. Add DUNS Number

Purpose	<p>DUNS numbers are frequently required in federal procurement systems. DUNS numbers have been added to NEA reporting requirements to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Compliance Act. Effective with NEA awards beginning with the number 11-6100-xxxx, states and regions may not make awards to an entity (non-profit, government, or business) that does not have a DUNS number.</p> <p>Updating the Standard to include this field promotes coherence in data collection efforts.</p>
Change	<p>A numeric field called Applicant Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number will be added to the National Standard as Grants Management System (GMS) field #12A. This field's need status in the National Standard will be classified as Necessary.</p>
Definition	<p>APPLICANT DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER: DUNS number of Applicant Name. Grantees who are individuals are exempted from this requirement. Enter "IND" if the grant was awarded to a grantee with a legal status of Individual.</p>
Notes	<p>Applicant Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) number is included in the Standard (GMS field #12).</p>

1b. Change Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) Status to Necessary

Purpose	<p>Applicant Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) currently is classified as Optional in the Standard as GMS field #12. All SAAs and RAOs utilize FEIN for tracking important information about grantees such as their tax-exempt status. FEINs are often central to SAA and RAO grant-making business practices and are helpful for researchers looking to join records from multiple sources.</p> <p>FEIN is not an NEA reporting requirement, however upgrading FEIN's status in the National Standard signals the importance of collecting and reporting this information.</p>
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Change	The need status of FEIN in the National Standard will be upgraded from Optional to Necessary. Within the definition, states are also instructed report FEIN numbers for individuals as IND.
Definition	FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (FEIN): The Federal Employer Identification is a unique number that identifies the organization to the Internal Revenue Service. Enter "IND" if the grant was awarded to a grantee with a legal status of Individual.
Notes	Because this field already exists in the Standard and is widely used, this change will not necessitate alteration of systems or business practices for most states and regions.

1c. Add Storytelling as a Theatre Sub-Code

Purpose	Storytelling is an artistic discipline that encompasses forms beyond its current classification as a sub-code under Folk/Traditional arts. To reflect this practice, the National Storytelling Network has advised that a storytelling code be made available under the major discipline category code of 04 Theatre. This change allows for storytelling activities to be identified more accurately as a specified discipline within Theatre when appropriate.
Change	The 04 Theatre category for both Applicant Discipline (GMS field #1C) and Project Discipline (GMS field #38) will now include five discipline sub-codes: 04 Theatre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A General B Mime D Puppet E Theatre for Young Audiences F Storytelling
Notes	All discipline sub-codes within the Standard are classified as Optional. The Standard will retain discipline category 12 (Folklife/Traditional Arts) sub-code D (Oral Traditions - include folk/traditional storytelling) for storytelling that occurs within a traditional arts context.

Non-sequential lettering in the Theatre discipline sub-codes is due to past revisions to the National Standard.

1d. Update the Status and Definition for the Application Number Field

Purpose	<p>Most states and regions assign a unique ID number to each grant application that they receive. This field (National Standard GMS field #20) is currently defined as, "An indicator assigned to the application and used in reference to it on other documents."</p> <p>The NEA is instituting a new requirement that this information be included on each grant record that appears on state and regional FDRs.</p> <p>This field has increased importance since it is now needed to join the FDR details section with the project activity location section. See Section 4: Activity Location in this document.</p>
Change	<p>Update the Application Number definition. This field's need status in the National Standard will be changed to Necessary.</p>
Definition	<p>APPLICATION NUMBER: A unique indicator assigned to each application for internal tracking purposes and for use as a bridge when joining application data to Activity Location details.</p>
Notes	<p>The National Endowment for the Arts refers to this field as "SAA/RAO Unique Identifier."</p> <p>Unlike DUNS or FEIN numbers (which refer to entities seeking funds and will not usually change from transaction to transaction), Application Number will vary with each grant proposal submitted to your agency. Every application should receive a unique Application Number assignment. Most states and regions do this already, so minimal changes to current grants management databases are anticipated.</p>

Section 2: Changes Affecting Project Data

2a. Rename Artists Participating as Artists Directly Involved

Purpose	Artist Participating (National Standard GMS field #128) will be retained, though the field name and definition are being revised to clarify the field's purpose and instructions. The change also is intended to mirror new NEA requirements.
Change	The name of National Standard GMS field #128 will change from Artists Participating to Artists Directly Involved. This field's need status in the National Standard will be retained as Necessary.
Definition	ARTISTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED: Number of artists directly involved in providing artistic services specifically identified with the award. Include living artists whose work is represented regardless of whether the work was provided by the artist or by an institution. If no artists were directly involved in providing artistic services enter 0.
Notes	The definition above slightly differs from the definition present in NEA FY15 Final Descriptive Report Instructions. The language "in an exhibition" has been removed to make clear that the definition applies to all art forms, not just the visual arts. The National Standard Working Group also has advised NASAA to provide tips to assist states and regions in collecting data for this field. See Section 6 below.

2b. Retire Project Descriptors

Purpose	These descriptors are rarely used by states and regions, pose an extra burden for applicants, and are being removed from NEA reporting requirements.
Change	Retire National Standard GMS field 39E, Project Descriptors.
Notes	SAA's and RAO's may opt to collect these data, but the coding system for doing so will not be retained by the Standard or required by the NEA. Change 3d (Add Populations Benefited by Distinct Groups) will collect similar information as was being collected in Project Descriptors for Youth at Risk and Accessibility.

Populations Benefited by Distinct Groups has been added as a future NEA reporting requirement.

Section 3: Changes Affecting Beneficiary Data

3a. Rename/Redefine Individuals Benefiting & Youth Benefiting

Purpose	<p>Currently the National Standard asks for Total Individuals and Youth Benefiting. Although definitions instruct grantees to report only individuals who are directly involved, inflated numbers are a chronic data quality problem.</p> <p>Forthcoming NEA reporting requirements narrow the parameters for collecting beneficiary data, requiring states and regions to collect “Adults and Youth Engaged in ‘In-Person’ Arts Experiences.” Revising the Standard to match the NEA requirements will bring tighter focus to the data, will avoid contradictory definitions, and may ameliorate the inflation of these numbers.</p>
Change	<p>National Standard GMS field #83 (Individuals Benefiting) and #83A (Youth Benefiting) will be revised to mirror the new NEA definitions. Both fields will remain categorized as Necessary within the Standard.</p>
Definition	<p>ADULTS AND YOUTH ENGAGED IN “IN-PERSON” ARTS EXPERIENCES: Enter the number of people who directly engaged with the arts, whether through attendance at arts events or participation in arts learning or other types of activities in which people were directly involved with artists or the arts. Do not count individuals primarily reached through TV, radio or cable broadcast, the Internet, or other media. Include actual audience numbers based on paid/free admissions or seats filled. Avoid inflated numbers, and do not double-count repeat attendees.</p> <p>83 ADULTS ENGAGED IN PERSON 83A YOUTH (under age 18) ENGAGED IN PERSON</p>
Notes	<p>Participation through electronic media, including webinars or any other on-line experience, should not be included. The distribution of literary material likewise should not be included.</p>

This change to the NEA requirements and to the National Standard does not preclude states and regions from collecting information on digital media, distribution of literary materials or other avenues of engagement. Agencies wishing to do this are advised to collect this data in a separate field. The National Standard Working Group has instructed NASAA to develop models and data collection advice to assist agencies wishing to track virtual/media participation. See [Section 6](#) below.

3b. Add Populations Benefited by Race

Purpose	<p>The Standard currently does not contain a mechanism for tracking the racial/ethnic characteristics of beneficiary groups. Intended beneficiaries are implied to some extent in the current Project Race field. However, that field's primary focus is on the content of projects, not audiences.</p> <p>The NEA is adding a new Populations Benefited by Race field to FDR reporting requirements. Mirroring this field in the Standard would more precisely describe the characteristics of populations served.</p>
Change	<p>The following field will be added in the National Standard GMS. This field's need status will be categorized as Necessary.</p>
Definition	<p>POPULATIONS BENEFITED BY RACE: Select any of the categories that, by your best estimate, made up 25% or more of the population that directly benefited from the award during the period of support. These responses should refer to populations reached directly, rather than through broadcasts or online programming.</p> <p>N American Indian/Alaska Native A Asian B Black/African American H Hispanic/Latino P Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander W White G No single race/ethnic group <i>listed above</i> made up more than 25% of the population directly benefited.</p>

Notes Data collected from the Populations Benefited by Race field should be monitored for data quality.

3c. Retire Project Race

Purpose Project Race data are infrequently utilized by NASAA, SAAs and RAOs. Data quality obtained from this field as it is currently implemented is perceived to be low.

The NEA is adding a new Populations Benefited by Race field to FDR reporting requirements (see above). Retiring Project Race and adopting Populations Benefited by Race will yield a tighter focus on populations served rather than assigning racial characteristics to projects.

Change The National Standard field for Project Race will be deleted.

Notes The National Standard Working Group has advised NASAA staff to develop materials for state and regions interested in continuing to track projects with unique multi-cultural elements as defining characteristics. See [Section 6](#) below.

Grantee Race, a field reflecting the racial/ethnic characteristics of the grantee—not the population served—will be **retained** in the Standard due to its value in helping states and regions monitor equity in funding distribution patterns. This field is not affected by the Project Race and Populations Benefited by Race updates described above. However, it should be noted that both Grantee Race and Project Race are being eliminated from NEA reporting requirements.

3d. Add Populations Benefited by Distinct Groups

Purpose The Standard does not currently include a mechanism for tracking distinct groups relevant to specific populations. The addition of such a field would make some data available, especially for projects designed to benefit underserved groups.

The NEA is adding a new Populations Benefited by Distinct Groups field to FDR reporting requirements. Mirroring this format in the Standard would support consistency in data collection.

Change Populations Benefited by Race will be added as a National Standard GMS field. This field's need status in the National Standard will be categorized as Necessary.

Definition **POPULATIONS BENEFITED BY DISTINCT GROUPS:** Select any of the categories that, by your best estimate, made up 25% or more of the population that directly benefited from the award during the period of support. These responses should refer to populations reached directly, rather than through broadcasts or online programming.

D Individuals with Disabilities

I Individuals in Institutions (include people living in hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, assisted care facilities, correctional facilities, and homeless shelters)

P Individuals below the Poverty Line

E Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

M Military Veterans/Active Duty Personnel

Y Youth at Risk

G No single distinct group made up more than 25% of the population directly benefited.

Notes Data collected from the Populations Benefited by Distinct Groups field should be closely monitored for data quality.

Section 4: Activity Location

4a. Add a Geographic Data Module to Capture Activity Locations

Purpose As currently crafted, the Standard can only document where funds were spent—not where activities took place. This omission may cause underreporting of geographic areas that benefit from funds awarded, especially for projects with statewide, regional or national reach.

A new module (a series of new fields in a supplemental table) is needed to capture this information in cases where the areas served reach beyond the Applicant Address. Adding these data will illuminate the geographic reach of arts activities funded by states and regions and will support improved analysis and communications regarding the impact of funds awarded.

The NEA FY 15 FDR reporting requirements will include a new section for sub-grantees to submit information on where activities funded by state and regional grants take place. The below additions to the Standard are similar to those requirements.

Change The National Standard will add a new module for Activity Location. All recommended field additions within this module will be classified as Necessary within the Standard.

Definitions For each grant or service supported by your agency, report the following information about the location(s) at which activities took place, if those activities occurred at a location different than the Applicant Address. If multiple activities occurred at multiple locations, enter information for each site as a separate record in this table.

ACTIVITY LOCATION

- 1. VENUE ADDRESS** (Latitude and Longitude can be provided in lieu of Venue Address, City, State & Zip)
Street address or Rural Route Number of applicant. Provide mailing address only if street address is not currently being collected. For venues based at an individual's home address, do not include street address or city; skip to #3.
- 2. VENUE CITY**
City where the venue is located.
- 3. VENUE STATE**
State where the venue is located
- 4. VENUE ZIP**
ZIP Code for address of the venue. Leave this field blank if the venue is outside the United States.
- 5. VENUE LATITUDE** (Venue address can be provided in lieu of Latitude and Longitude)
Geographic coordinate for the latitude of the venue. Use Decimal Degrees, without the degree symbol (DDD.DDDDD).
- 6. VENUE LONGITUDE** (Venue address can be provided in lieu of Latitude and Longitude)
Geographic coordinate for the longitude of the venue. Use Decimal Degrees, without the degree symbol (DDD.DDDDD).
- 7. APPLICATION NUMBER**
National Standard GMS field #20: A unique indicator assigned to each application for internal tracking purposes and for use as a bridge when joining application data to Activity Location details.

Notes

Note that a one-to-many relationship will often exist between a grant record in an agency's Grants Management System (GMS) and entries in the table of Activity Location data. Each GMS record may be associated with multiple Activity Location records when activities occur at more than one site.

Within the NEA requirements, Project Activity Location is only required for a selected set of Activity Type projects (excluding, for example, Operating Support and other large-scale activities). See NEA FY 15 FDR requirements for the complete list. The Standard, however, recommends collection of location data for *all* types of activities; over the long term, this will most accurately reflect the reach and impact of arts investments.

Section 5: Additional Notes on NEA Requirements

Several additional data collection changes will be included in NEA FY 15 reporting requirements. In these cases, the National Standard Working Group did not feel it prudent to adjust the Standard for these specific fields and codes at this time:

- **NEA Primary Strategic Outcome** is unique to the federal agency's needs.
- **Primary Beneficiaries by Age** categories were seen as too specific to be reasonably reported by grantees.
- **The number of days on which an activity took place** may be of limited utility and would impose an additional data collection burden.
- **Congressional District** is *not* being removed from the Standard (GMS Field #10), even though it will no longer be an NEA reporting requirement. The Working Group noted that it remains important for states and regions to be able to report which grant awards were made in each congressional district. NASAA and the NEA will verify the congressional district for each FDR record based on applicant location information. States and regions are encouraged to do likewise.
- **Public Art/Percent for Art** is being added as a new Activity Type code within NEA reporting requirements for NEA FY 15/SAA and RAO FY 16, but the Working Group recommended against its inclusion in the Standard. The Working Group acknowledged that public art and percent for art activities are conspicuous in their absence within the current coding taxonomy. However, the Working Group considered the wide variety of mechanisms used to support public art and percent for art and decided

that an Activity Type code within the Grants Management module of the Standard would not yield accurate information on public sector investments in this work.

- **Grantee Race** is being removed from NEA FDR requirements but is *not* being removed from the Standard. See the explanation in the notes section of [item 3c](#) above.

Section 6: Implementation Notes

Implementation Notes

All changes to the National Standard would take effect concomitantly with NEA reporting requirement changes scheduled for NEA FY 15/SAA and RAO FY 16.

Selected system changes recommended in this document are complex and may require additional technical implementation guidance from NASAA and the NEA. After acceptance of the National Standard revisions by the NASAA board and the NEA, NASAA plans to develop supporting materials that assist states and regions with implementing the changes. As part of that process, the National Standard Working Group has advised that special attention be paid to these issues:

Activity Location

Activity Location will entail a major change to data collection systems and require a separate data module. Implementation materials will need to consider solutions that can be attained by SAA and RAO grants management software systems and technology service providers. Implementation materials will also need to consider the complexity of SAA and RAO grantmaking (which includes both grants to individuals and operating support grants to organizations) and provide data collection recommendations that consider a multitude of grant types.

Artists Directly Involved

The definition section of revision#2a (Rename Artists Participating as Artists Directly Involved) slightly differs from the definition present in NEA FY15 Final Descriptive Report Instructions. The language “in an exhibition” is removed from the definition change to the National Standard. This change was made to ameliorate concerns about the language “in an exhibition” suggesting a too-narrow scope of artistic activities. NASAA staff will develop data collection tips to assist SAAs and RAOs in providing guidance on counting artists in cases where the direct involvement of artists may take multiple forms.

Tracking Virtual/Media Engagement

Changes to the National Standard in Section 3a (“Adults and Youth Engaged in ‘In-Person’ Arts Experiences”) as well as changes to the NEA FY15 Final Descriptive Report Instructions specifically omit participation in virtual/media experiences. During the revisions proposal comment period, multiple states and regions expressed a desire to track online participation and engagement occurring via digital media, broadcasts and print distribution channels. There is acknowledgement and consensus that these forms have become an increased part of arts participation and constituent communications. States, regions and sub-grantees can elect to track such data in separate fields for their own reporting and performance measurement purposes. Although a data standard for tracking virtual arts experiences will not be developed in this round of National Standard revisions, NASAA will provide models and guidance for agencies interested in tracking virtual or media participation numbers to supplement or complete the in-person data required by the NEA and the Standard.

Project Cultural Traditions

Revision number 3c states that Project Race is now retired from the National Standard. However, the National Standard Working group noted that some agencies may find value in the collection of related data about projects with specific ethnic and cultural elements as defining characteristics. To assist states and regions in these efforts, NASAA will develop and distribute examples (including definitions, coding lists and collection advice) demonstrating how this might be achieved. These suggestions would not be Standard requirements, but would offer a useful point of departure for states and regions wishing to pursue this information.

Section 7: Future Recommendations

Future Recommendations from the 2014 National Standard Working Group

Refinement of methods, consideration of new practices and tackling difficult issues for which multiple perspectives exist are all part of the job of a National Standard Working Group. Given the complexity of this work and its changing nature, Working Groups are not expected to resolve every issue. Throughout the revisions process, this Working Group debated numerous data collection challenges, not all of which ended with a final revision. Several items of particular importance were necessarily tabled in this round of discussion but will be forwarded to future Working Groups for their consideration. These items include:

Tracking Employment Data

Considered within this revisions process was the need for states, regions and federal partners to track the number of jobs directly generated through SAA and RAO activities. All agreed on the importance of this kind of information, but the optimal method for tracking it remained a subject of debate. Questions raised within this debate included the technical difficulty in tracking employment data where numerous part-time, full-time, seasonal and temporary workers exist; what job types should be reported when there are both administrative and artistic job functions; and the acknowledgement of the complexities of labor data combined with the limitations of FDRs and the National Standard as tracking mechanisms for this type of information.

Project Descriptors and Activity Types

Project descriptors are being retired within the National Standard and NEA reporting requirements. Reporting of Project Descriptors is not robust, and states, regions and grantees view them as problematic. However, the field's retirement means that the Standard loses a flexible "catch-all" field that has been useful for tracking some issues. The Working Group was particularly worried about losing the Project Descriptor code for Presenting and Touring. Additionally, the group acknowledged the difficulty in separating and categorizing project purposes and project activities. The compartmentalization of project purposes and project activities has been a long-standing data collection challenge in the field. While resolving the ability to capture multiple project purposes and specific project activities was tabled by this Working Group, the Group would like to see discussion of these challenges continue in the future.

Discipline Codes

Although only one revision is being made to discipline codes within this (Storytelling), the Working Group recommends that a more thorough inspection of discipline codes be conducted in the future. While many of the major discipline codes are utilized effectively, discipline sub-code reporting is not as robust, and art forms are constantly evolving.