



WHAT THE **FEDERAL** IS HAPPENING?

Join Arts NC Executive Director
Nate McGaha

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26th
at 11 AM EST





WTF?



Nate McGaha
Executive Director
Arts North Carolina
Nate@ArtsNC.org
919-605-6150

*I am **NOT** a lawyer... so I am definitely **NOT** your lawyer*

This webinar should **NOT be considered legal advice. **

Overview

- ☐ Making Decisions Right Now
- ☐ Early Executive Orders
- ☐ Institute of Museum and Library Services
- ☐ DEI, Gender Ideology, and the NEA
- ☐ Federal Works of Art
- ☐ The Kennedy Performing Arts Center
- ☐ Federal Tax Policy
- ☐ Possible Impact and Advice
- ☐ Questions/Discussion





Making Decisions Right Now

- ❑ **Information:** Find as much information as you can but know that much of it is *intentionally vague and unclear*. Better to have some information than none but be aware of the *difference between information and speculation*.
- ❑ **Review your Mission, Vision, and Values:** Take a moment to review what you and/or your organization *values and the purpose you serve*.
- ❑ **Assess the Situation and the Risk:** Weigh all your options, even the less desirable ones, and all the possible consequences. *Understand the risks* of your decisions as well as the reasons you make them.
- ❑ **Are you complying in advance?** Are you making a choice before you have even been asked to avoid possible consequences? We often proactively choose the safest course, but in this moment, *we may risk overreacting and compromising our values*.





Early Executive Orders



- ❑ **Disbanded President's Committee on Arts & Humanities** 01/20/2025
 - ❑ Disbanded in 2017 after all council members resigned
 - ❑ Biden reinstated the Committee in 2024
- ❑ **Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government** 01/20/2025
 - ❑ Federal government only recognizes two genders: male and female
 - ❑ Federal dollars cannot fund "gender ideology" (anything other than male/female)
 - ❑ Rescinds all former federal transgender rules and guidance
- ❑ **Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity** 01/21/2025
 - ❑ Federal grantees must certify they don't engage in *illegal* DEI practices
 - ❑ Ends federal DEI programs and cuts funds to colleges with DEI programs
 - ❑ Directs federal agencies to work towards ending private sector DEI programs
- ❑ **Celebrating America's 250th Birthday** 02/03/2025
 - ❑ Established Task Force to plan celebrations (similar to Obama-formed Committee)
 - ❑ NEA, NEH, and IMLS included in Task Force and Committee



Institute of Museum and Library Services



- ❑ **EO: Continuing the Reduction of the Federal Bureaucracy** 03/14/2025
- ❑ March 14th Executive Order **directs 7 Federal Agencies, including Institute of Museum and Library Services, to drastically downsize.**
 - ❑ Also, **US Agency for Global Media (Voice of America)**
- ❑ "the non-statutory components and functions of the following governmental entities **shall be eliminated to the maximum extent consistent with applicable law**"
- ❑ **Reports were due March 21st from each agency** on "which components or functions of the governmental entity, if any, are **statutorily required and to what extent.**"



➤ **ACTION** for the Institute of Museum and Library Services

- [American Alliance of Museums](#)
- [American Library Association](#)



INSTITUTE of
Museum and Library
SERVICES





INSTITUTE of
Museum and Library
SERVICES

IMLS News


March 2025

Keith E. Sonderling Sworn In as Acting Director of Institute of Museum and Library Services

WASHINGTON – Deputy Secretary of Labor Keith E. Sonderling was sworn in as Acting Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) today, after being designated to the role by President Donald J. Trump. IMLS, an independent government agency, is the primary source of federal support for the nation's museums and libraries.

"It is an honor to be appointed by President Trump to lead this important organization in its mission to advance, support, and empower America's museums and libraries, which stand as cornerstones of learning and culture in our society. I am committed to steering this organization in lockstep with this Administration to enhance efficiency and foster innovation. We will revitalize IMLS and restore focus on patriotism, ensuring we preserve our country's core values, promote American exceptionalism and cultivate love of country in future generations," said Acting Director Sonderling.

03/19/2025



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Join

DOGE is at the Institue of Museum and Library Services right now, AM 03/20, to shut down the agency

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is being raided by DOGE and the new Acting Director (also somehow DepSec of Labor) Keith Sonderling with the express intent to shut it down. Sonderling was sworn-in in the lobby of the office building (955 L'Enfant Plaza) and they are proceeding with quickly and quietly dismantling the agency. There is no major reporting on the death of IMLS.

There are Department of Homeland Security personnel present - to bully a bunch of civil servants who administer grants to museums and libraries.

IMLS offices are on the 4th floor of 955 L'Enfant. There is no media present to document this efficiency saving of .004% of the federal budget. Every library system in the country receives these grants. Museums in every state depend on them. Every penny disbursed is American tax dollars back in American communities.

This is one of the 7 federal agencies offered up as a needless sacrificial lamb in the catastrophic resolution and last week's EO.

↑ 4,577

↓

361

2

1.3k

03/20/2025

3/12/25: NEH Director Shelly Lowe asked step down





National Endowment for the Arts



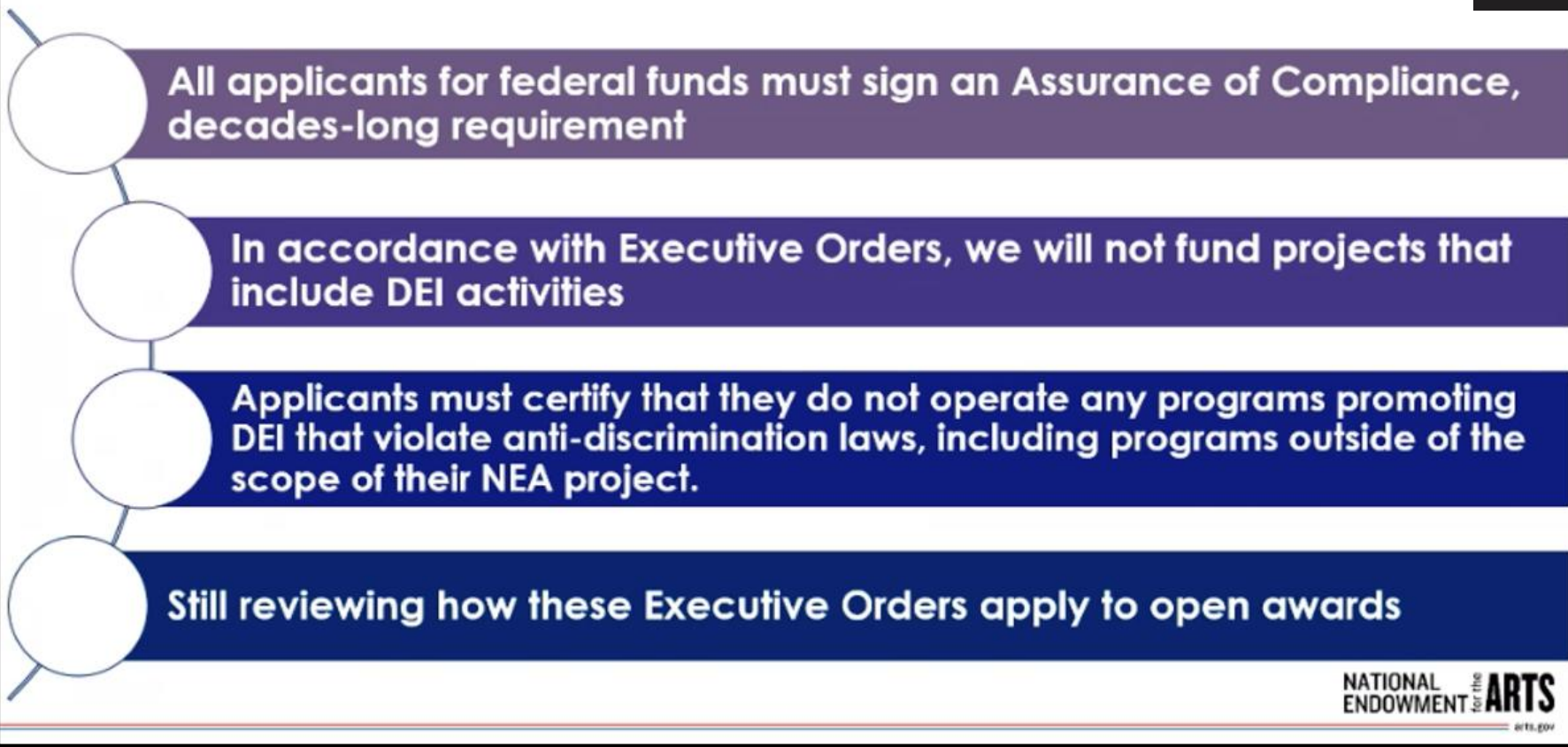
- ❑ NEA is currently led by Mary Anne Carter as Senior Advisor
 - ❑ She was Chair of the NEA from 2019-2021
- ❑ NEA ended separate Challenge America Grants
 - ❑ Redirected funds and rolled program into Grants for Art Projects
- ❑ NEA will give preference to America250 projects, but is funding other projects
- ❑ Additions made to NEA grants application [Assurance of Compliance](#):
 - ❑ **The applicant will comply with all applicable Executive Orders while the award is being administered.** Executive orders are posted at [whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions).
 - ❑ The applicant's compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the U.S. Government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code, pursuant to Executive Order No. 14173, **Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity**, dated January 21, 2025.
 - ❑ **The applicant will not operate any programs promoting "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws**, in accordance with Executive Order No. 14173.
 - ❑ The applicant understands that federal funds shall not be used to promote gender ideology, pursuant to Executive Order No. 14168, **Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government**.



National Endowment for the Arts



National Endowment for the Arts Assurance of Compliance Questions



[NEA Grants Webinar- February 18, 2025](#)



National Endowment for the Arts



National Endowment for the Arts Other Areas of Focus

Originate from or are in collaboration with:

- Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Tribal Colleges and Universities
- American Indian and Alaska Native tribes
- Hispanic Serving Institutions
- Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, and
- Organizations that support the independence of people with disabilities.

Support the health and well-being of people and communities through the arts.

Support existing and new technology-centered creative practices across all artistic disciplines and forms

- Including work that explores or reflects on the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) in ways that are consistent with valuing human artistry and improve the public's awareness and understanding of the use of AI.



[NEA Grants Webinar- February 18, 2025](#)



National Endowment for the Arts



Congress passed extension of most current spending through FY25: 3/15/25

- ☐ NEA & NEH stay the same as FY23 & FY24 at \$207 million each.
- ☐ President Trump's FY26 Proposed Budget may not be until mid-May.

- ☐ **NEA Grants for Arts Project: Round 1 Application-Part 2 now due April 7th** (from March 24) to allow applicant to review new Assurance of Compliance.
- ☐ **Court injunction paused "DEI" Executive Order: 2/21/25**
 - ☐ NEA changed [Assurance of Compliance](#) to say would not ask applicant to certify compliance with DEI EO while injunction is in effect.
 - ☐ Appeals Court lifted the injunction: 3/14/25
 - ☐ Assurance of Compliance has not change as of today: 3/26/25
- ☐ **Rhode Island ACLU filed lawsuit against NEA about "Gender Ideology" EO: 3/6/25**
 - ☐ **1st Amendment:** Restricts artistic expression and imposes viewpoint-based discrimination.
 - ☐ **5th Amendment:** Violates due process by imposing vague and arbitrary restrictions.
 - ☐ **Administrative Procedure Act (APA):** Arbitrarily changes grant eligibility requirements without proper public notice or comment.
 - ☐ The suit is filed on behalf of **Rhode Island Latino Arts, the Theater Offensive, National Queer Theater, and Theatre Communications Group.**
 - ☐ NEA changed [Assurance of Compliance](#) to say would not ask applicant to certify compliance with "Gender Ideology" EO **pending outcome of litigation : 3/10/25**



Federal Artworks

- ❑ **More than 26,000 government-owned art objects**, some of which date to the 1850s and many from the WPA era, **have been left un-stewarded.**
- ❑ **Half of the nearly 40 employees in the GSA division devoted to artistic and historic preservation have been dismissed** from their positions, pending termination.
- ❑ **"At least" five regional offices of the General Services Administration were shuttered** earlier this month.
- ❑ **Since 1975 the Art in Architecture program has operated as a commissioning body for the federal government**, devoting .5% of federal construction costs to art commissions.



[Trump layoffs leave more than 26,000 government-owned artworks in limbo - The Art Newspaper](#)



Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

- ❑ **Dismissed most of the Kennedy Center board** on February 12th
- ❑ **Appointed Trump loyalists to Kennedy Center board**
- ❑ **President Trump was elected Kennedy Center board Chair**
- ❑ **Terminated contract of Kennedy Center President**
- ❑ **Advisors to programs such as Renee Fleming and Ben Folds resigned**





Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

- ❑ **President Trump attended Kennedy Center board meeting as Chairman** on March 17th.
- ❑ **New resolution gave Trump power to appoint and dismiss panelists that award Kennedy Center Honors.** Trump suggested that he should host the awards show.
- ❑ **Trump talked about updating the architecture and décor.** (finishing the columns, etc.)
- ❑ **Trump said programming would improve.** No longer "woke."



[Trump Visits the Kennedy Center and Muses on Hosting its Honors Gala - The New York Times](#)

[Trump uses Kennedy Center visit to criticize the venue and tout his efforts to remake it | CNN Politics](#)



Federal Tax Legislation

Charitable Act

- ❑ **Allow tax filers using standard deduction** (90% of filers) to deduct donations as well.
- ❑ **Up to \$4,600 for Individuals and \$9,200 for couples.**
- ❑ **Senate ([S. 317](#)): 1/29/25:** Lankford (R-OK), Coons (D-DE)
- ❑ **House ([H.R. 801](#)): 1/28/25 :** Moore (R-UT), Pappas (D-NH), Miller (R-WV), Davis (D-IL)
- ❑ **Sign-On Letter: National Council of Nonprofits**



Performing Artist Tax Parity Act

- ❑ **Sets Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) to \$100,000** (\$200k for couples)
 - ❑ **Performing Artist AGI has been \$16,000 since 1986.**
- ❑ **House ([H.R. 721](#)) 1/20/25:** Buchanan (R-FL), Chu (D-CA)
- ❑ **Senate Filing THIS WEEK:** Warner (D-VA), Tillis (R-NC)
- ❑ **Arts NC partnered with Actors Equity to recruit NC organizations to sign a letter in 2024 and again in 2025 for Senator Tillis to support PATPA in Senate** (56 NC orgs signed in 2025, 29 in 2024).



How State Arts Agencies Could Be Affected

- ❑ **Funding Fluctuations:** Shifts in federal priorities could affect state allocations and partnership agreements.
- ❑ **Legislative Challenges:** Federal environment could increase political pressures and embolden further restrictions on state funding usage and changes in DEI policies.
- ❑ **Opportunities:** Responsive state policies could lead to new state-led initiatives, interagency partnerships, and creative funding mechanisms. America 250 is providing opportunities to some state arts agencies.
- ❑ **Case Studies:** Look at the recent strategies of other Republican majority states for clues as to how adaptation might be possible in North Carolina.



North
Carolina
Arts
Council



ARTS Day: April 22, 2025

McKimmon Conference Center at NC State



Pam Breaux

President and CEO

[National Assembly of State Arts Agencies](#)



David Holland

Deputy Director

[Creative West](#) &

Co-Chair

[Creative State Coalition](#)



Creative
West



Creative
States
Coalition



Advice from Sociologist Jennifer Walter...

- ❑ **Set boundaries:** Pick 2-3 key issues you deeply care about and focus your attention there. You can't track everything - that's by design. Impact comes from sustained focus, not scattered awareness.
- ❑ **Use aggregators & experts:** Find trusted analysts who do the heavy lifting of synthesis. Look for those explaining patterns, not just events.
- ❑ **Remember:** Feeling overwhelmed is the point. When you recognize this, you regain some power. Take breaks. Process. This is a marathon.
- ❑ **Practice going slow:** Wait before reacting to new policies. The urgent clouds the important. Initial reporting often misses context.
- ❑ **Build community:** Share the cognitive load. Different people track different issues. Network intelligence beats individual overload.



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Questions

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- ☐ Early Executive Orders
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