REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

CREATIVE FORCES: NEA MILITARY HEALING ARTS NETWORK
IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION OF THE CLINIC-TO-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
PILOT/Demonstration PROJECT

SECTION A

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Purpose

The intent of this RFP is to solicit proposals for an implementation evaluation study of approximately 10 to 12 demonstration/pilot projects that will inform strategies and improve understanding of how clinic-and-community collaborations, in support of community-based arts programming, can enhance the health, wellness, and quality of life for Creative Forces target populations. We are seeking at least one demonstration project associated with each of the active Creative Forces sites.

Contract Award Amount

The funding mechanism for this study will be a contract through Americans for the Arts (AFTA) with an available budget of up to $100,000.

Contract Term

November 5, 2018 through November 15, 2019

Background

Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and state and local arts agencies. The network serves the special needs of military service members and veterans, along with their families and caregivers, who are dealing with traumatic brain injury (TBI) and psychological health conditions, while also supporting the needs of the broader military and veteran population exposed to trauma, to promote well-being and improved quality of life.

The program has three components: Creative Forces places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care in military medical facilities, VA medical centers, as well as a telehealth program for patients in rural and remote areas; provides increased community-based arts opportunities for military service members and veteran family populations around clinical
Americans for the Arts serves as the Administrator for Creative Forces. Funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to Americans for the Arts through a Cooperative Agreement. More information about Creative Forces can be found on the NEA website.

In keeping with a core aim of Creative Forces, to increase community-based arts opportunities for military service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers, this contract will support an evaluation of the demonstration projects associated with each Creative Forces network site. The demonstration projects are projected to start in October 2019.

Active Creative Forces sites currently include:

- **Alaska:** Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Anchorage
- **California:** Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Oceanside
- **Colorado:** Fort Carson, near Colorado Springs
- **Florida:** James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital, Tampa and Malcom Randall Veterans’ Medical Center, Gainesville
- **Maryland:** National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) at Walter Reed, Bethesda
- **North Carolina:** Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville
- **Texas:** Fort Hood, Killeen
- **Virginia:** Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County, and Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth
- **Washington:** Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Tacoma

Demonstration projects may include, but are not limited to, activities that: increase access to the arts by military patients, service members, veterans and their families/caregivers; improve collaboration among the local military, veteran and arts communities; expand the network of community arts providers connecting to the military base and local military and veteran organizations; and demonstrate an approach or tactic that could inform broader efforts, across the network, potentially by being replicated in other geographic locations.

Projects that may already be operative, and supporting military and veteran populations around a Creative Forces site, are eligible for support if the proposal makes the case for how the project will contribute to the learning goals of the network: to better understand how community arts engagement can bridge the connection between clinic to community and advance the health and wellness of Creative Forces target populations.
In all cases, demonstration projects must:

- Improve our understanding of how clinic and community collaboration, in support of community-based arts programming, can enhance the health, wellness and quality of life for Creative Forces target populations.

- Be reflective of an opportunity and/or priority that surfaced during, or in response to, the Creative Forces Summit site.

- Involve the participation of multiple partners, including but not limited to:
  - creative arts therapists associated with the Creative Forces clinical sites
  - military/civilian representatives connected to the larger military base, such as Military Community Health Prevention Councils
  - local arts agencies, state arts agencies, regional arts organizations and individual artists/teaching artists
  - local military/veteran service organizations such as state-level Veterans Affairs departments
  - community-based social service organizations and educational institutions, among others

- Consider the potential for the project to be replicated within the existing service area and across the Creative Forces network.

- Be documented in order to serve as a reference for other sites. Project documentation may include materials such as progress reports, training materials, manuals toolkits, webinars, promotional materials, etc, all of which will be submitted and included in the online National Resource Center for sharing, free of charge, throughout the network and the greater public.

- Participate in program evaluations activities, in cooperation with a consultant contracted separately by AFTA, in order to assess and share with others strategies employed by Creative Forces partners to improve the health and wellness of our target population. This may include the collection and submission of data and information related to project planning through implementation.

- Be carried out within a range of federal funding support, available through the Creative Forces Cooperative Agreement within a one-year period to begin no sooner than October 8, 2018 to September 30, 2019.
SECTION B

PROJECT SCOPE

The objective of this implementation evaluation study is to document the pilot/demonstration projects funded through the Clinic-to-Community Engagement Demonstration Project, identify promising practices or lessons learned, and identify infrastructure and resource needs for potentially supporting and sustaining community-based arts opportunities for military service members, veterans, and their families and caregivers.

The study shall consist of case studies of each project and a cross-case analysis. The case studies for each demonstration project will describe:

1) project design, including key inputs, targeted population(s), and strategies/activities;
2) project implementation, including action steps and timeline;
3) partnerships that supported project implementation;
4) project outputs, including the “reach” to the targeted population(s);
5) impact(s) of the project on participants, the lead organization, and its partners;
6) the context or setting for the project, including the needs and characteristics of the military-connected community associated with the site;
7) additional funding sources or mechanisms of support utilized beyond the Creative Forces funding, and;
8) lessons learned as reported by project stakeholders.

In preparing the case studies, the consultants are expected to provide an appropriate methodology, possibly including on-site interviews of relevant stakeholders. Quantitative and qualitative methods are expected to be used to determine project impacts.
SECTION C

STATEMENT OF WORK

Working closely with the AFTA Creative Forces Project Director and Project Administrator, and members of the Creative Forces national project team as appropriate, the contractor shall perform the following tasks:

1. Kick-off Meeting and Project Administration

The contractor shall attend a kick-off meeting (either in-person or via telecon) within two (2) weeks of the contract award with the Creative Forces project director and project administrator and Creative Forces national team representatives. The contractor shall submit to the project administrator a draft agenda at least two days in advance of the meeting. Within one (1) week following the kick-off meeting, the contractor shall prepare and submit a memorandum summarizing the discussion and any decisions reached. The project administrator shall review and approve the memorandum. The contractor shall be required to submit memoranda/minutes summarizing discussions and action items for subsequent meetings as well.

The contractor shall submit a detailed timeline for accomplishing the remaining tasks of the contract, incorporating input from the kick-off meeting. The timeline should include participation in monthly teleconferences or web conferences with the project director, project administrator and other AFTA/NEA representatives, preparation of minutes documenting such meetings, as well as monthly progress reports (not to exceed two (2) pages) outlining all the work accomplished during the previous month, challenges and how they were addressed, and upcoming actions. AFTA may also require conference calls along with the progress reports, as needed. Meeting minutes and progress reports must be submitted to the project director for approval.

2. Evaluation Plan

The contractor shall prepare a detailed evaluation plan for the project director’s review and approval. The evaluation plan shall include the following components:

a. Research questions
b. Description of the study design
c. Identification of data sources, data collection methods and instruments; all instruments should be appended to the plan
d. Analytical plan
e. Overall study timeline
f. Approach to the protection of human subjects/consent strategy (as appropriate)
g. Plan for communications with projects’ staff and stakeholders
h. Reporting plan

Other components may be added to the evaluation plan at the contractor’s discretion, subject to the approval of the project director. Note that the communications plan shall include templates of communications that will be sent to evaluation study participants. All communications intended to be distributed to the public during contract performance shall be provided to AFTA for review prior to dissemination. Note that data collection that does not require an onsite site visit may be conducted remotely as a cost-saving measure.

3. Review of Project Plans

The contractor shall review each demonstration project plan and offer feedback with the intent of strengthening the project design and implementation. The contractor shall submit written feedback not to exceed 4 pages for each project within one week of receiving the project plan.

4. Study Implementation

The contractor shall implement the study, following the plan and using the instruments approved by the project director. The contractor shall be responsible for all study-related communications with study participants and is expected to independently conduct all data collection activities without support from AFTA. Progress on evaluation implementation will be monitored through monthly teleconferences and progress reports as noted under Task 1. Note that projects are required to collect and submit data and other information at the request of the contracted evaluator; projects are also required to submit work products, including training materials, manuals, toolkits, webinars, promotional materials, and other materials.

The project director shall be copied on all correspondence with project personnel. The contractor shall make available de-identified transcripts, notes, and data files upon request by the project director during the study.

5. Evaluation Report

The contractor shall prepare an evaluation report that summarizes the Creative Forces Clinic-to-Community Engagement study. The evaluation report will not exceed 60 pages in length (inclusive of appendices) and shall include the components listed below using a plain language approach. The contractor is strongly encouraged to incorporate graphics into the report. Following receipt of feedback from AFTA (up to three (3) rounds), the contractor shall prepare and submit a final evaluation report.

a. Executive summary not to exceed two pages
b. Introduction and background
c. Evaluation design and approach, including research questions, description of the evaluation design and methods, with copies of data collection instruments presented in an appendix
d. Study findings, presented by research question; must include case presentation for each site and a cross-case analysis

e. Conclusions and recommendations for future Creative Forces Clinic-to-Community Engagement solicitations, appropriate funding levels, reporting requirements, and performance metrics.

**Schedule of Deliverables**

Each deliverable resulting from this contract shall be submitted as a Microsoft Word document. Report deliverables should follow The Chicago Manual of Style, and electronic versions of all tables, charts, graphs, and data visualizations should be submitted in the program that was used to create them (e.g., Excel, Photoshop, Tableau). The contractor shall be responsible for ensuring compatibility of submissions. Additionally, the contractor shall provide all deliverables in compliance with Section 508 requirements. In presenting the project timeline, the contractor shall be cognizant that some deliverables may require up to three rounds of feedback from AFTA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Phase/Task</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Due Date (Weeks after Kick-off Meeting)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kick-off Meeting and Project Administration</td>
<td>Attendance at kick-off meeting</td>
<td>0 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Memo summarizing discussion &amp; decisions</td>
<td>1 week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>1 week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monthly progress reports (through end of project)</td>
<td>15th of each month</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Meeting minutes</td>
<td>2 days after meeting</td>
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<td>2. Evaluation Plan</td>
<td>Draft of evaluation plan</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final evaluation plan</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
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<td>3. Project Plan Review</td>
<td>Up to 4 pages of written feedback per project</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Study Implementation</td>
<td>De-identified transcripts, notes, and data files (upon request)</td>
<td>As requested</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Evaluation Report</td>
<td>Draft report</td>
<td>October 25, 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final report (Key Deliverable #4)</td>
<td>November 15, 2019</td>
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SECTION D

PROPOSALS

The proposal shall be no more than 15 pages, single spaced, in 12-point font. This page limit is exclusive of resumes, appendices, and all other attachments and supplemental materials. Submissions shall include at a minimum each of the following:

➢ Understanding of the project through a discussion of the rationale and purpose of the project.

➢ Technical approach to completing the tasks and deliverables associated with this project in terms of:
  o Description of intended work under each task, including the proposed evaluation design, cost-effective plans for collecting the information needed to address the research questions, analyzing and synthesizing data from all sources, and communicating findings;
  o Proposed approach to all deliverables; and
  o Identification of potential challenges and strategies for addressing them.

➢ Management plan, including:
  o Organization chart of proposed project team, including identification of lead staff for each task;
  o Illustration of staff assignments by task and distribution of person hours spent on each task;
  o Other existing commitments for each proposed staff member; and
  o Work schedule by task including timeline for deliverables.

➢ Qualifications for proposed personnel, including subcontractors. Names and qualifications of key project personnel, including the lead project manager(s). Resumes for all key personnel must be submitted.

➢ Organizational capacity and experience, including the demonstration of organizational experience with projects of a similar scope and magnitude to what is described in the statement of work.
SECTION E

EVALUATION FACTORS

For each evaluation factor, a point scoring system will be used to rank all proposals, using a rating scale of 100 points. The evaluation will include five (5) major areas:

1. Understanding of the Project (10 points)
   The contractor demonstrates a thorough understanding of the policy and programmatic context for the study, as shown through discussion of the rationale and purpose for the project. The contractor provides evidence of a clear understanding of community-based arts programming for military and veteran patients and other military-connected populations. The contractor demonstrates knowledge of existing research and data on the topic of community-based arts programming for military and veteran populations, including how existing data and/or previous studies may provide insights into the current project. The contractor does not simply repeat the statement of work but shows an independent understanding of the issues and context inherent to evaluations with a focus on community-based arts programming for military-connected populations.

2. Technical Approach (30 points)
   The contractor’s approach is succinct and logical in format, consistent with the tasks to be accomplished, and fully addresses the purposes described in the statement of work. The proposed technical approach clearly specifies and describes the intended work under each task. The proposal presents clear plans for gathering the information needed to effectively address the study scope, identifying relevant individuals to contact, using appropriate methods to analyze and synthesize data from all sources, and communicating findings. The proposal discusses the contractor’s proposed approach to all deliverables, including the structure and contents of the final study report. The contractor identifies potential challenges to the project’s success and presents strategies for addressing them. Overall, the technical approach is of a high quality and demonstrates broad knowledge of the assessment of implementation and outcomes associated with community-based arts programming for military-connected populations, and thorough technical proficiency with the methodologies that will be effective in addressing the study scope.

3. Management Plan (10 points)
   The management plan clearly explains how the project will be managed, and includes each of the following: an organization chart of the proposed project team; an indication of lead staff for each task; an illustration of staff assignments by task and distribution of person hours to be spent on each task; other existing commitments for each proposed staff member and a work schedule by task that includes a timetable for deliverables. If subcontractors are to be used for any portion of the work, the management plan should describe their roles, responsibilities, and time commitments. The management plan should also contain a clear description of the contractor’s plans for overseeing subcontractors.
4. **Personnel Qualifications, Organization Capacity and Experience (25 points)**

   The contractor demonstrates that the proposed personnel, including subcontractors (if applicable), possess experience conducting mixed-method evaluation studies, and provides evidence of having conducted tasks similar to the work outlined in the RFP (with examples cited). The proposal provides evidence of the overall competency of the proposed study team in the methodologies required, including relevant experience of the proposed lead project manager and other key staff in understanding programmatic issues, identification and analysis of program information, interviewing a variety of program officials, and communicating research findings through quality project reports. The proposed lead project manager has demonstrated experience in managing projects of comparable scale and complexity. The contractor demonstrates experience with projects of a similar scope and magnitude to what is described in this statement of work, i.e., community-based arts engagement project, especially those involving military-connected populations with health and/or wellness outcomes (with examples cited).

5. **Price (25 points)**

   The proposed budget is appropriate to the administration of the project. AFTA will evaluate the contractor’s proposed prices to make a determination that the costs are fair and reasonable in relation to the services provided. The contractor shall provide a reasonable breakdown of their costs to allow AFTA to make an assessment of the various components of the overall price. The breakdown shall clearly identify and provide costs by key personnel and task as well as the breakdown between labor costs and other direct costs. The proposal presents cost-effective plans for gathering the information needed to address the research questions, identifying relevant individuals to contact, analyzing and synthesizing data from all sources, and communicating findings to policymakers.

**SECTION E**

**Application and Award Details**

Submit the following by Monday, October 8, 2018:

- Project proposal addressing in detail the project scope and parameters outlined in Section B, identification of key personnel, description of work products, and timeline to implement Statement of Work in Section C;
- Qualifications of key personnel; please identify project manager and contract POC;
- Detailed project budget and narrative notes;
- Names and contact information for up to 3 references.
Submit all proposal materials to:

ATTN: CREATIVE FORCES PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR

- By email: creativeforces@artsusa.org
- By mail: Americans for the Arts, 1000 Vermont Avenue, NW 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20005

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:

- By email: Received no later than 5:00 pm ET, Monday, October 8, 2018
- By mail: Postmarked no later than Monday, October 8, 2018

SUBMITTING QUESTIONS:

- All questions pertaining to this solicitation must be submitted via email to creativeforces@artsusa.org. Phone calls are not permitted.
- All responses to applicant questions will be posted to the RFP public site at: www.AmericansfortheArts.org/creativeforces on an ongoing basis.

SUMMARY OF KEY DATES:

RFP ISSUED: September 20, 2018
PROPOSALS DUE: October 8, 2018
AWARD NOTICE: October 19, 2018
PROJECT START DATE: o/a November 5, 2018
TARGET COMPLETION DATE: November 15, 2019