

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Literature Review, Needs-Assessment, and Creative Arts Therapies and Non-clinical Arts Engagement Field Scans For National Guard and Reserve Populations

Section A. INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Background:

Creative Forces®: NEA Healing Arts Network seeks a contracting entity/contractor to conduct a literature review, needs-assessment, and Creative Arts Therapies (clinical or psychoeducational) and Non-clinical Arts Engagement field scans aimed to determine opportunities for the integration of new programming addressing National Guard and Reserve populations. The work completed under this request for proposal is supported through Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network (the Network, or “Creative Forces”) project. **Americans for the Arts (AFTA)** serves as an Administrator for Creative Forces, which implements standardized creative arts therapies programs for service members, veterans and families in Creative Forces clinical settings across the country. Creative Forces currently is expanding programmatic activities and community engagement opportunities to involve other military treatment facilities, Veterans Health Administration medical facilities, and arts and community organizations. Funding for Creative Forces is provided by the **National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** to **AFTA** as a Cooperative Agreement. Creative Forces® is a registered trademark of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The mission of the Creative Forces Network is to improve the health, wellness, and quality of life of trauma-exposed military service members and veterans, as well as their families and caregivers, by increasing knowledge of and access to clinical creative arts therapies and community arts engagement.

Furthermore, the Creative Forces Network aims to promote research collaborations among the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, to advance knowledge, leverage subject-matter expertise and promote utilization of best practices to benefit target populations.

The program has three components: **1. Clinical.** Creative Forces places creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care in military medical facilities, and in telehealth programs for patients in rural and remote areas; **2. Community Engagement.** Creative Forces provides increased community-based arts opportunities for military and veteran family populations around clinical site locations, and; **3. Capacity.** Creative Forces invests in capacity-building efforts, including the development of manuals, training, and research on the impacts and benefits of the treatment methods, as well as the development of an online National Resource Center/Enterprise Software Platform.

The Creative Forces Program model for development of new target population responses includes the following four phases: 1. Discovery, 2. Pilot and Logic Model Development, 3. Model Implementation

and Evaluation and 4. Revision and Replication. This RFP and its deliverables represent the Discovery Phase of this process which will inform the Creative Forces Pilot and Logic Model development for National Guard and Reserve populations.

This contract will entail the development of a literature review and needs-assessment report surrounding Guard and Reserve populations (inclusive of family members). Additionally, a creative arts therapies field scan of individuals and organizations working with National Guard and Reserve populations, will be required in the areas of Art Therapy, Music Therapy, Dance/Movement Therapy, Drama Therapy, Psychodrama, and Poetry Therapy. A second, separate field scan should focus on (non-clinical) arts engagement efforts for National Guard and Reserve populations. These field scans should identify a) the organization offering services, including the credentials of the person offering the service (artist, creative arts therapist, or non-creative arts therapies clinician), b) the population the organization serves, c) the type of therapy or engagement offered, and d) setting in which the service is offered, such as a National Guard or Reserve units, clinical space, or community setting.

The resulting report consisting of the literature review, needs-assessment, and field scans, will be utilized to support the implementation of a pilot program and subsequent logic model development for National Guard and Reserve populations (inclusive of family members). The report should include recommendations for pilot programming based on the needs assessment and creative arts therapies/non-clinical arts engagement field scan. Potential partners for collaboration should also be identified.

As part of the Creative Forces mission to place creative arts therapies at the core of patient-centered care in medical facilities and provide Creative Arts Therapist-informed psychoeducation in the community alongside non-clinical programming, it is critical that development of new population responses are informed by past and current clinical efforts and relevant literature.

The purpose of the National Guard and Reserve literature review, needs-assessment, and creative arts therapies/non-clinical arts engagement field scans are to aggregate knowledge that can provide additional context on key issues facing these target populations and improve understanding of the stressors and other challenges that impact their quality of life. The evidence created through the capture and compilation of the aggregated data will be used as one of the resources to guide Creative Forces strategic planning, evaluate programming, and consider new program design and implementation. Additionally, this content may be included as part of an online Creative Forces National Resource Center document library scheduled to be in place in 2020 to support capacity-building efforts for the initiative and to enable more responsive support for these populations through Creative Forces clinical programming, research activities, and arts engagement efforts in community settings.

The ultimate goal of the report is to provide pertinent background information on the needs of National Guard and Reserve populations to inform efforts that improve the well-being and quality of life for these target populations via creative arts therapies treatment or Creative Arts Therapist-informed psychoeducation delivered by the Creative Forces: NEA Military Healing Arts Network.

Section B. PROJECT SCOPE AND DELIVERABLES

This contract will lead to the development of a target population literature review, needs-assessment and creative arts therapies/non-clinical arts engagement field scans, and recommendations that can inform the expansion of Creative Forces clinical and community programs over the next one to two years. The reports shall be built upon the current research and evaluation study findings, white papers or reports, interviews/facilitated discussions with individuals and organizations working with the target population.

For example, resiliency training is used across the Departments of Defense and Veteran’s Affairs as an effective rehabilitation tool (Committee on the Assessment of Ongoing Efforts in the Treatment of PTSD, 2014). With the high frequency of deployments that National Guard and Reserve populations experience, and limited training time they are provided, National Guardsmen and Reservists are high risk for developing PTSD (Fink et al., 2016). In addition, according to a 2019 report by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NAS), “NG and Reserves service members and their families experience many of the same opportunities and challenges as active-duty service members; however, there are certain experiences particular to the reserve component (pg. S-5).

Other information (i.e., both academic and “gray” literature) that can address the following subsets of the target population is also relevant to report. In formulating recommendations, the contractor should consider how the recommendations align with the Creative Forces mission and identify potential partners, budgetary requirements and potential issues for Phase 2: Pilot and Logic Model Development considerations (i.e. administrative, scientific, legal).

Specific categories of the target population that the contractor shall address include:

Population

- Members of the National Guard and Reserve and family members of these populations.

Program Type(s)

- Integration of creative arts therapies and/or arts engagement activities within existing military and civilian models that serve Guard and Reserve populations (e.g., Yellow Ribbon program, VetCenters, etc.).

The literature review and, needs assessment, and field scans of the report will include:

- Description of target populations demographics and population profile.
- Description of the unique clinical, health, and quality of life considerations for the Guard and Reserve as a specific military-connected population.

- Research findings that identify treatment access issues facing Guard and Reserve populations.
- Research findings (e.g., from secondary dataset analyses) that can provide a general understanding of the needs of the target populations.
- Relevant research and evaluation findings, measurement strategies, and research-based data-collection tools associated with community-based health interventions (i.e., not just arts-related) that have shown promise for improving health and well-being of the target populations.
- Relevant research and evaluation findings regarding access or barriers (i.e. factors such as access to health care based on military status, compressed training schedules, transportation, program locations, etc.) to creative arts therapies (clinical and psychoeducation) and non-clinical arts engagement opportunities.

The Needs-Assessment report will include:

Summary of needs by target population categories, including stressors and other challenges that impact quality of life. This includes consideration of time-directed responses to units as they re-deploy, and inclusion of a familial support component are strongly recommended. These programmatic guidelines are aligned with recommendations made by the NAS committee, which state:

- To help military leaders and nonmilitary service providers in civilian communities better understand and prioritize issues specific to their local communities, the Department of Defense should provide guidance for military leaders and service providers on how to readily and reliably access and utilize information about the surrounding communities in which their personnel are situated (recommendation 5).
- The Department of Defense should enable military family support providers, civilian or in uniform, who work for military systems, and consumers to access effective, evidence-based and evidence-informed family strengthening programs, resources, and services (recommendation 7).
- Timeline response needs based on phases of National Guard and Reserve training and deployment schedules. For example:
 - Creative arts programs that address prevention and early intervention for Guard and Reserve populations via pre-deployment trainings and readiness briefings.
 - Creative arts techniques that can be implemented during deployment.
 - Creative arts programs that address recovery and intervention post-deployment
 - Creative arts programs offered during routine drill weekends and between deployments.
- Explanation of current creative arts therapies or arts engagement programming designed to meet target population needs.
- Identification of gaps in existing programming.

The creative arts therapies* and non-clinical arts engagement field scans will include:

- Evidence-based examples of programs that are meeting the needs of individuals serving in the National Guard and Reserves. These field scans should identify a) the organization offering services, including the credentials of the person offering the service (artist, creative arts therapist, non-creative arts therapies clinician), b) the population the organization serves, c) the type of therapy or engagement offered, and d) setting in which the service is offered, such as unit, clinical space, community setting.
- Prioritization of the impacts that can be measured through the types of interventions delivered by creative arts therapists (both clinical and psychoeducational) and non-clinical arts engagement administrators.
- Evidence-based recommendations of categories of plausible health and well-being-related outcomes for the target populations.

The recommendations shall include:

- Recommendations for Creative Forces pilot response and program design implementation of creative arts therapies and/or non-clinical psychoeducation or arts engagement for the target populations.
- Identify potential partners, budgetary requirements and potential issues for Phase 2: Pilot and Logic Model Development considerations (i.e. administrative, scientific, legal).

*The creative arts therapies are composed of Art Therapy, Music Therapy, Dance/movement Therapy, Drama therapy, Poetry Therapy, and Psychodrama delivered by credentialed creative arts therapists.

In support of the above deliverables, the contractor shall engage a broad array of internal and external subject matter (SME) experts in relevant areas of research, program evaluation, community and individual wellness and metrics development. With support from the project team, the contractor will plan and facilitate interviews, discussions, teleconferences, and/or focus groups to invite feedback, insight, and comments from SMEs across a diverse set of sectors. The purpose of these engagements shall be to:

- Assemble and synthesize findings on the needs of the target populations from the latest research and policy efforts.
- Gather best practices and review case studies to determine promising lines of inquiry, and potential alignment with Creative Forces clinical and community program outcomes.
- Inform program strategy and evaluation models.
- Inform efforts to develop metrics to measure relevant impacts or outcomes.
- Report on barriers and motivations for engagement in the creative arts therapies and non-clinical arts engagement

Section C. REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL REPORT DELIVERABLES

Each report deliverable resulting from this contract will include a Microsoft Word version. Consistent with other NEA publications, this report should follow The Chicago Manual of Style and the NEA style guide, which will be provided to the contractor at the time of award. All sources shall be fully cited in report deliverables. 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), and the contractor shall work with NEA staff to determine an appropriate and compatible file format to use. The contractor shall be responsible for ensuring compatibility of submissions.

The contractor shall perform the following tasks:

C.1 Project Coordination.

a) Organize and attend a project kick-off meeting with the project team (AFTA Creative Forces Project Administrator, Creative Forces Military Medical Advisor, all LEAD CATs, and additional Creative Forces personnel as identified) to review project tasks, timeline and discuss project design. The contractor shall prepare a memorandum summarizing the discussion and all decisions. This meeting may take place on-site or via video or teleconference.

b) The contractor will provide contact information and bios for all personnel assigned to project. The contractor and Creative Forces will both identify project leads that serve as the primary point of contact for coordination of the project.

c) The contractor shall prepare a detailed timeline and work plan for accomplishing deliverables. The contractor shall submit this draft timeline and work plan to the Creative Forces Project Administrator for review and edits. The contractor will have one week to submit a finalized plan incorporating the edits provided.

C.2 Communications. The contractor will organize and hold regular teleconferences with the project team and prepare minutes documenting these meetings. Approximately 3 – 5 teleconferences shall be held over the course of the period of performance and may be held more or less frequently at the discretion of the project lead or upon request by the contractor. Contractor shall submit a mid-project progress report not exceeding 1 page by November 1, 2020.

C.3. Final Deliverable. The contractor shall produce a synthesis report that includes a literature review, needs assessment report, creative arts therapies field scan, non-clinical arts engagement field scan, and recommendations as outlined in Section B on the needs of National Guard and Reserve populations.

Synthesis Report Outline:

- I. Literature Review
 - a. Relevant clinical research on creative arts therapies with National Guard and Reserve populations.

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- b. Relevant literature regarding non-clinical arts engagement/community programs for National Guard and Reserve populations.

- II. Needs Assessment
 - a. Summary of the SME interviews, discussions, and other engagement efforts.
 - b. Identify core needs of National Guard and Reserve populations.

- III. Field Scan
 - a. Existing creative arts therapies programming with National Guard and Reserve populations.
 - b. Existing non-clinical arts engagement/community programs for National Guard and Reserve populations.

- IV. Target population response recommendations
 - a. Pilot program design recommendations that address National Guard and Reserve populations.
 - b. Evaluation metrics recommendations.

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While the NEA and AFTA Creative Forces project directors and the project team will provide some materials to include in the review, the contractor is responsible for identifying materials to include in the literature review and needs assessment report.

The contractor is responsible for preparing a written report summarizing the findings. **The report, excluding attachments, will not exceed sixty pages and will be written in plain language suitable for a general audience.** The contractor shall submit a proposed outline of the paper for AFTA and NEA approval prior to preparing the first draft. The AFTA and the NEA may review up to two drafts prior to accepting the final deliverable.

Section D: DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Project Phase/Task	Deliverable	Due Date (after award)
1. Project Kick Off Meeting	Planning meeting with AFTA Creative Forces Project Administrator, Creative Forces Military Medical Advisor, Lead Creative Forces creative arts therapists and additional personnel as identified. Memo summarizing discussion & decisions submitted by contractor to AFTA Creative Forces Project Administrator	Within the first week after contract execution
2. Timeline/work plan	a. Draft of timeline & work plan b. Finalized timeline & work plans	1 week after kick-off meeting

		2 weeks after kick-off meeting
3. Communications	a. Mid-project Reports b. Regularly scheduled meetings and minutes	November 1, 2020 3 to 5 TBD
4. Product Review	a. Interview Protocol b. Report Table of Contents and/or Outline c. Final Report (2 weeks review time allowed)	a./ b. per developed timeline and work plan. c. December 1, 2020
5. Final Product Delivery	Report delivered with edits addressed	December 31, 2020

Section E: CONTRACT PERIOD AND AMOUNT

The work contained under this contract shall begin on or about August 15, 2020 and conclude on or about December 31, 2020. All work must be completed by December 31, 2020.

The cost for support services and deliverables of this RFP shall not exceed \$40,000.

Section F: EVALUATION FACTOR FOR AWARD

Evaluation Criteria

1. *Understanding of the Project (40 points)*
2. *Technical Approach (20 points)*
3. *Personnel Qualifications and Experience (30 points)*
4. *Price (10 points)*

Understanding of the Project (40 points)

The contractor demonstrates a thorough understanding of the project, as shown through discussion of the rationale and purpose for the project. The contractor provides evidence and work samples of similar projects which included a literature review, needs assessment, and field scan.

Technical Approach (20 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 and presents a work schedule by task that includes a timetable for deliverables. The proposal discusses the contractor’s proposed approach to all deliverables. The contractor identifies potential challenges to the project’s success and presents strategies for addressing them.

Personnel Qualifications and Experience (Past Performance) (30 points)

The contractor demonstrates: knowledge and understanding of the subject area and experience with the target population; proposed personnel, including subcontractors (if applicable), possess experience in the

delivery of a literature review, needs assessment, and field scan report. The contractor provides evidence of having conducted tasks similar to the scope of work outlined in the RFP (with examples cited, and links to relevant work products).

Price (10 points)

The proposed budget is appropriate to the administration of the project. Americans for the Arts will evaluate the Contractor's proposed prices to decide 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 Americans for the Arts to assess 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.

Section G: SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submit:

- Cover Letter
- Proposal
- Resumes
- Budget
- Writing samples (literature reviews, needs-assessments and/or field scan reports)

Submit Proposals To:

- By email: creativeforces@artsusa.org

Deadline for Submission:

Received no later than 8pm EDT August 4, 2020

Submitting Questions:

All questions pertaining to this solicitation may be directed to creativeforces@artsusa.org. All responses to applicant questions will be posted to the RFP public site at <https://www.americansforthearts.org/about-americans-for-the-arts/careers-at-americans-for-the-arts/join-our-team>

All questions must be submitted no later than 4pm EDT on July 24th in order to guarantee posting to the public site. All responses will be publicly posted to the website on an ongoing basis.

References:

Committee on the Assessment of Ongoing Efforts in the Treatment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. (2017). Board on the Health of Select Populations; Institute of Medicine. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US).

Fink, D., Cohen, G., Sampson, L., Gifford, R., Fullerton, C., Ursano, R., Galea, S. (2017). Incidence of and

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risk for posttraumatic stress disorder and depression in a representative sample of U.S. Reserve and National Guard. *HHS Public Access* doi: [10.1016/j.annepidem.2016.01.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annepidem.2016.01.003)

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2019. *Strengthening the Military Family Readiness System for a Changing American Society*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25380>