

# CREATIVE FORCES

## Community Engagement Grant

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS

CREATIVE FORCES



MID-AMERICA ARTS ALLIANCE

### FY23 CREATIVE FORCES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PR TOOLKIT *HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES*

This Working with the Media toolkit is designed to help you create and implement a media plan for your participation in Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants. These resources are a guide only—you should tailor your public relations strategy to what makes sense for your organization.

- [Working with the Media](#)
- [Media Resources](#)
- [Choosing a Spokesperson](#)
- [Radio & TV Etiquette](#)
- [Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant Talking Points](#)
- [Social Media Tips and Ideas](#)
- [How to Use Public Service Announcements \(PSAs\)](#)
- [Partnering with other Organizations to Maximize Media Interest](#)

Questions on media outreach? Contact NEA Public Affairs at 202-682-5570 or [publicaffairs@arts.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@arts.gov).  
For more information, visit [arts.gov/creativeforces](https://arts.gov/creativeforces) or [creativeforcesnrc.arts.gov](https://creativeforcesnrc.arts.gov).

*Your promotional efforts may focus on direct outreach to your local [military installation](#) or military-affiliated organizations that don't require working with the media. This could include sending emails, posting flyers, and/or using social media. Information on [social media](#) is included in this toolkit. The following sections on working with the media, radio and TV etiquette, etc. are intended for those interested and able to work with the media.*

## **WORKING WITH THE MEDIA**

**The national announcement for the recipients of the 2023/24 Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants will take place on or around Wednesday, June 6, 2023.** You can help amplify the national announcement of the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants with your own local media outreach efforts on or after the national launch announcement to highlight your involvement in Creative Forces.

**Organize your media strategy**—Your goal: promote your participation in Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants to local audiences. How will you deliver that message, and what specific tactics will you use to reach this goal? When will you host your event? Will you partner with your participating organization to issue a joint announcement to local media? Perhaps you will concentrate on social media to reach your target audience. Create a plan that is practical for your time and resources, and feel free to use the following tips.

**Assign media responsibilities**—Decide who will be your main media contact. Other duties may include creating a media list, writing and distributing news releases and advisories, placing calendar listings, arranging interviews, securing photographers, and developing social media content. Determine who will be your Creative Forces [spokesperson](#).

**Create a timeline**—Set a schedule for creating and distributing press information about the Creative Forces Community Engagement announcement and events. Include deadlines for writing releases, booking a photographer, and scheduling social media tactics, such as blog posts, YouTube videos, and tweets. Check with local media on their deadlines for news releases, advisories, online and social media content, and factor that into your schedule.

**Connect with partners**—Consider coordinating efforts with other grant recipients in your state or region, and reach out to your local military installation. See this list for all grant recipients.

**Perfect your pitch**—What's unique about your involvement? Are there multiple Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants in your area? Will you host special events for military families? Consider pitching a feature story, such as an interview with a military family.

## **MEDIA OUTREACH**

- Develop a media list for your launch announcement. Target local print, online, and broadcast news outlets. Include military outlets, university news outlets, community or civic organization newsletters, local wire service bureaus (e.g., Associated Press), and local bloggers. Remember to gather all contact information, including title, outlet, address, phone, email, and Twitter handle, for example.
- As you build your list, find out who the local arts reporters are for print, radio, TV, and online news outlets. Who covers community events or human-interest stories? Who covers military news? Which columnists write about

local affairs? Find out who the assignment editors are at your local TV news stations. Remember to include photo editors on your list.

- Announce to the media that your organization is a recipient in the nationwide Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants program. Use the sample press release/advisory.
- Send a photo of one of the provided images or one from your organization of a similar event alongside your release. Make sure it is print quality (300 dpi, at least 4"x6") and make sure you have the rights to distribute the photo.
- Follow up! After you send your release, call the reporter, editor, or blogger, confirm they received the release, briefly pitch your story or event, offer interviews with spokespeople, and ask if they will cover your Creative Forces Community Engagement news or event.

### **PLANNING A MEDIA EVENT**

Are you planning an event as part of your participation in Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants? Here are some tips on organizing the event and promoting it to the media.

- If you are planning one or more events around Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants, announce your schedule of events to the media. Customize the template release in the PR toolkit and send it to media to promote your event. Send media advisories 4–5 days before each event, highlighting who/what/when/where of the event.
- Prepare a press kit with a press release, biographical information for speakers (if you are holding an event), a schedule of any other special, related events, and fact sheets or FAQs for your organization and Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants.
- Make follow-up phone calls to key reporters or editors to whom you have sent the press release or advisory. Confirm they received your press release, briefly pitch your story, and ask the reporter, assignment editor, or blogger if they plan to cover your event. Don't forget to offer your spokesperson for an interview.
- Request a meeting with editorial board staff to educate them about your Creative Forces Community Engagement grant. The editors might write an editorial on the program, or assign a beat reporter to cover the local story/event.
- Keep an RSVP list of potential media attendees so that you know how many press kits you'll need.

### **Photography at your event**

- Assign a person to take photographs at your launch and any other events. Inform the photographer of your expectations, including length of coverage, important shots, and post-event delivery of images.
- Right after the event, have the photographer email you 2–3 photos to post in your newsroom or social media.
- Each photo must have caption and credit information (names of each person in the photo, what's taking place, photographer's name). Confirm usage rights with photographer via contract or otherwise.

- Suggested photos include candid or posed shots of military members, family members, and/or caregivers participating in your event.

Images should be at least 300 dpi resolution and a minimum size of 4x6 inches for print and at least 72 dpi resolution and a minimum size of 4x6 inches for web.

- Send these high-quality, high-resolution photos to media with a follow-up press release or story. Post these photos on your organization’s website to encourage more families to take advantage of this program.
- At the event, consider having participants sign a release form to get their permission to use their images in future advertising or media coverage. Check with your marketing team if you have a media release form on file. You may also use the [NEA Creative Forces media release](#) as a template. At the event, you might post a notice or announce at the start that participants’ images may be used for future publicity.

#### **Prepare for TV or radio coverage of your announcement or event**

- Ask if the venue has a mult-box—audio equipment that allows a camera/audio crew to record straight from the venue’s sound system. No mult-box? Place camera crews where they can record audio. Tell the camera crews if the venue has restrictions (i.e., no flash, no roaming cameras, etc.).
- Reserve seating for media, and rope off camera crew space for media crews. This may be near the mult-box.

#### **Welcome media to the event**

- Designate a welcome area for media, such as a media desk where you can greet media and give out press materials.
- At the welcome area, assign a person as the designated media contact. That person should greet attending media, have them sign in (to collect phone and email), give them a press kit, and bring them to the designated media space.
- Ask reporters if they are interested in interviews with any of the principals.
- Designate an (ideally quiet) location for interviews. Assign a person to escort media to and from the interview site.

#### **Follow up with media after the event**

- Send the press release or a follow-up press release or story, and one or two photos to media who attended.
- Post an item (with photos) on your blog/social media platform. Email reporters with a link to your follow-up press release or story.
- Post downloadable images from the event on your website’s media page, offer a media contact for more assistance.

### **Monitor your media coverage**

- Monitor local print, online, and broadcast news for coverage of Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant program.
- Draft a “media highlights” report of top earned media placements to share internally. How many articles were placed, and in which outlets? If possible, capture circulation numbers to quantify your PR results. Analyze the tone of coverage, and the types of stories produced. Add links to online news stories to your website.
- Share your media. Keep the National Endowment for the Arts and Mid-America Arts Alliance informed of your local Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant media success by tagging the NEA on social media @NEACreativeForces (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram) and @NEA\_CFNetwork (Twitter) as well as M-AAA at @kcmaaa (Facebook, Twitter), @midamericaartsalliance (Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn). You can also send us news clips and media highlights about your local program. We may feature those highlights in our social media channels, newsletters, websites, and other communications platforms. Contact us at creativeforces@maa.org. Use hashtags #CreativeForces and #ArtsandMilitary

### **Requesting corrections**

- Monitor coverage for accuracy. Despite your best efforts, media coverage may include inaccuracies. Prevent mistakes before they happen by sending media written copies of your program information.
- Does coverage include a factual mistake? Request a correction for factual errors, such as the name of your organization, the target audience, or the dates of your program.
- Was the mistake really the media’s fault? Perhaps there was a typo in the program materials, or maybe your spokesperson went off message. Either way, it is still okay to ask for a correction, just acknowledge the gaffe.
- Be polite and professional when asking for a correction; frame it as a request, not a demand. Just point out the error and provide the correct information. Too late for a print correction? Ask for a correction in the online version. If a reporter expresses an unfavorable opinion of your project, consider a conversation to clear up any misunderstanding. Keep in mind that unless there is a factual mistake there’s no obligation to issue a correction.

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## MEDIA RESOURCES

Your list of media contacts should include your community’s print, broadcast, and social media outlets. Use the resources below to research the local media community. Below are examples of online media resources but this is not an exhaustive list. You may be able to find other resources through your local reference librarian or by searching online.

- **Media Databases**—There are a number of online media databases that track news outlets and reporters. You can search for print, online, radio, TV, etc. and create media lists for specific projects. These services often include information from specific reporters about what they do/do not cover as well as how they prefer to be contacted. These services usually are available by subscription.
- **[www.usnpl.com](http://www.usnpl.com)**— Contains a list of local newspapers, local magazines, and college newspapers.
- **[Newslink.org](http://Newslink.org)**— This website sorts outlets by state and contains lists of business and specialty newspapers. It also covers TV and radio stations.
- **[NPR.org](http://NPR.org)**—The National Public Radio (NPR) website offers information on local NPR affiliates.
- **[Stationindex.com](http://Stationindex.com)**—Lists most TV stations in the top 210 media markets.
- **[Radio Station World](#)** — Search this website for television and radio stations in several categories.
- The US Department of Defense offers a variety of social media resources for military families like **[DoDVclips on YouTube](#)**, and **[MilitaryOneSource on Facebook](#)**.

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## CHOOSING A SPOKESPERSON

Choosing the person or persons who will be the “public face” or subject-matter-expert of your project is an important decision. The people you want should be completely at ease with public speaking, talking with the media, and being on camera in either a taped or live situation.

You may want one person who talks to the media and one person who does community outreach such as to business, community, or education leaders. Whether you have one or more people in that role, you need to have someone who is up to the task. Sometimes even the best program administrator is not the best public spokesperson, so please consider this role carefully.

The person you want is:

- fully knowledgeable about your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant.
- outgoing and at ease speaking in front of an audience.
- comfortable speaking with media.
- not afraid of a microphone or a video camera.
- familiar with local media.
- understands deadlines and the importance of disseminating information in a timely manner.

The person you don't want is:

- juggling so many other tasks that calling reporters or returning their calls falls to the bottom of the list.
- uncomfortable with public speaking or being on television.
- not supportive of the military.
- someone who doesn't normally read the newspaper or watch the news.

Use the Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants [Talking Points](#) to brief your spokesperson. The talking points should be given to your spokesperson(s) to study so that there is a familiarity with why this program was created and what it means to your local community. It's important to remember that while your programming is localized to your community, you are part of a national initiative.

**Issues management** - Make sure your spokesperson is prepared to answer questions from the media about any potentially contentious topics. Draft a list of questions and answers you might receive from the media in such a circumstance. For instance, how will you respond if a crisis forces you to cancel your events? How will you respond if visitors object to content created by your program?

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## RADIO AND TV ETIQUETTE/INTERVIEW TIPS

**Before a radio or TV interview** - Clarify the interview details with the media outlet representative (reporter or producer). Who will interview your spokesperson? When and where will the interview take place (in the studio or via phone)? How long will the interview last? What are the questions? What's the format of the interview (live interview, taped for future editing, or 'live-to-tape' [to be aired 'as-is,' with no editing]). Where/when will the interview air (on a news program, or a local entertainment show)? Is it a call-in show? If you are calling the studio, confirm who is calling to commence the interview.

After you've collected the details, create an interview memo that outlines the "who/what/when/where/why/how" information and give it to your spokesperson to review before the interview. Include the producer's contact information. Send your media contact an advance press kit and ask them if you can talk about specific events.

### **During the interview:**

- If you are taping at a studio, be on time. Broadcast programming is scheduled to the second. Plan to arrive 15–20 minutes prior to the scheduled recording time, so you can prepare and relax. If you are calling in to the studio, the producers may ask that you call from a landline or via a specific app on a smart phone. Make sure you're calling from a quiet location.
- You may wear a microphone or headphones; always assume your mic is "on" and speak appropriately. For radio, feel free to bring notes, since no one can see you reading. Relax and enjoy the conversation.
- If you are calling the producer, get the correct phone number and a back-up number. Find out how long before the interview they want you to call in and make that call on time. Be prepared to stay on hold for a few minutes, during which you will likely hear the on-air product. If the station is calling you, make sure they have the correct number and a back-up, and make sure you are available at the appointed time.

**What do I say?** A typical local TV news story is 80 seconds long. Be ready to convey your top three messages about your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant in short, concise soundbites, about 10 seconds each. Speak clearly and not too fast. After you convey the key messages, add anecdotes about your project. Practice out loud to get rid of audible pauses like "uhm" and "you know."

**Where do I look?** If the interviewer is with you, you can look at the interviewer, rather than the camera. If the interviewer is elsewhere, (the anchor is in a studio and you are in a remote location), the producer may ask you to look into the camera.

**What do I wear?** Wear flattering, professional clothes in solid, neutral (not too dark) colors or subtle patterns.

### **After the interview:**

Send your interviewer a note to thank them for sharing your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant news—it's a great way to show you appreciate their efforts and helps cultivate your relationship for future coverage of your organization.



**TIPS FOR DOING INTERVIEWS VIA COMPUTER** - Many media outlets are using web platforms to conduct interviews, both for radio and television. The media outlet will usually provide instructions in advance as well as technical support. Make sure you take the time in advance to download any needed platforms and make sure you're familiar with how they work. If you can, test them in advance to work out any issues.

**Before the interview:**

- Find a suitable location and prepare it for the interview.
  - The space should be free of any bright lights or windows visible on camera. If the space cannot be changed, steps should be taken to minimize bright lights such as closing curtains or blinds, and adjusting or turning off lights.
  - The setting behind you should reflect the values of your organization and add to what you are saying, rather than detract.
  - Position yourself where there is light to illuminate your face. Desktop lamps can be positioned behind or next to the computer. If a lighting device is not available try to make use of natural lighting like sitting near a window positioned behind the computer so it illuminates your face.
  - Find a location that minimizes external noise. If located in a room, close the door and windows.
  - Sit in a chair that does not swivel.
- Prepare technical equipment for the interview
  - Ensure your webcam and microphone are working. If using the built-in microphone on a computer or laptop try to position it no more than two feet away from where you are sitting.
  - Sit center in front of the webcam. Position the angle so that your face is in the upper half of the frame. If the webcam is separate from the computer/laptop, place it as close as possible to the area you'll be looking during the interview.
  - Have a set of headphones or earbuds ready to wear for the interview so that audio doesn't feedback into the microphone.

**The interview:**

**Where do I look?** Try to look at the camera as much as possible. If you're interacting with others who are visible on your screen it okay to look at them as long as the camera is close to where you're looking.

**What do I wear?** Try to use headphones or earbuds during the interview. It will prevent the microphone from picking up unwanted computer audio and creating feedback. Use the similar guidance for television interviews but know your interviewer will likely only see you from the waist up.

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## CREATIVE FORCES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANTS TALKING POINTS

*This document is for internal use by Creative Forces spokespeople. Feel free to share with organizational leadership and use this language as a guide for interviews with the media. This document is not intended for distribution.*

### Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network

- Creative Forces®: NEA Military Healing Arts Network is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs that seeks to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military and veteran populations exposed to trauma, as well as their families and caregivers.

### Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant Program

- The Creative Forces® Community Engagement Grants is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in partnership with Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA). This grant program aims to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for military service members and veterans exposed to trauma as well as their families and caregivers through experiences of art or art making.
- This is the inaugural grant program for Creative Forces, open to arts organizations nationwide to provide non-clinical, community-based arts engagement programming to military-connected populations. The 2023/24 program awarded 34 grants to organizations totaling \$764,283.
  - *Talk about the programming that your organization plans to carry out*
- Organizations that are partnering with grantee arts organizations to facilitate/accomplish these projects include arts and culture organizations and veteran support organizations, and are in communities across the country.
  - *Talk about the organization(s) you are partnering with and how the connection with them and your organization came about. What do you both bring to the table?*
- Participants in these programs can gain a better understanding of themselves and others through one or more of the following: creative expression, social connectedness, resilience, and independence and successful adaptation to civilian life.
  - *If you have experience with this type of programming, what are some of the successes you have seen? When communicating with the media, do you have images to share?*

### Creative Forces Social Media

@NEACreativeForces (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram)

@NEA\_CFNetwork (Twitter)

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## **SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR #CreativeForces**

There are many options for promoting your project in addition to external media (newspapers, radio and TV, magazines, online versions of these outlets). Social media tools such as blogs, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are useful, free resources that can extend the reach of your message. With social media, you play a different role: you take on the role of the journalist, telling your story directly to your community. Consider social media tactics in your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant communications plan.

Creative Forces now has its own social media accounts. Feel free to tag these accounts so we can follow your project and also so we can share your posts.

@NEACreativeForces (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram)

@NEA\_CFNetwork (Twitter)

### **Key ideas for social media planning**

#### **Create a plan that works for you & be consistent**

There are many social media channels to choose from, but you do not need to use all of them. Select platforms that meet your needs, time, and people resources, and that have the most potential to reach your target audiences. Social media involves time-intensive writing, editing, and sometimes, media production. Consider what types of high-quality content you are able to produce or already have on hand when considering your social media choices.

Plan for your social media efforts. Who will write and/or edit the content? How long will it take to write/edit/get any necessary approvals of the content? How often do you plan to publish fresh content? Who will monitor and respond to public queries on social media channels?

Include your social media channel information on your press materials. Include icons and links for your social media channels on your website home page. Remember that social media is part of your branding effort; if possible, be consistent with the names you use on each of your social media platforms.

#### **The “80/20” rule**

Social media users want to build community around interesting, informative, useful, and fun content. Make sure your content is a mix of hard news (press releases), narrative content (blog posts, or video stories), and external content. Consider the 80/20 rule: have 20 percent of your posts promote Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants news, and use the other 80 percent to share interesting news about your community, the arts field, and more.

#### **Engage with images**

Images are key to a successful social media strategy. Social media content with visuals often has a better success rate. Use a cell-phone camera to capture high-quality, digital images of materials in your collection as well as community interaction with your project. There are multiple sites online that now offer high-quality images under a Creative Commons or Creative Commons Zero license that you can use to augment your own photos.

#### **Use ALT tags**

To make sure your content is accessible to people with low or no vision, it's best practice to write ALT tags for any images included in your content. ALT tags are short descriptions of what is shown in each image. Each social media platform has

different character limits and procedures for adding ALT tags; you should be able to access this information on the platform's help page.

### **Blog**

- Blogging is an easy entry to social media. Try free blogging hosts available online. Remember that blogs tend to be more conversational in tone, and can be customized to reflect the personality of your organization. Post first-person narratives as well as news announcements. Read blogs from similar organizations to get a sense of the length, tone, and types of content. If you enable comments to interact with readers, develop a comment policy and plan to review comments on a timely basis.
- Aim to publish new content at least once a week. If you publish less than 3x/week, choose consistent dates. Need content ideas? Consider interviews with staff, artists, scholars, or military personnel, veterans, families, and/or caregivers who have participated in your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant; articles about your event; photos from your arts organization centered on a particular theme; and photos of the military related community visiting your event.

### **Twitter**

- When you register for a free [Twitter](#) account, you will have to select several Twitter accounts to follow (get their Twitter messages sent to you) so make sure to do this research beforehand. There are online search engines to help you find Twitter users with similar interests that you can follow, including [@NEA\\_CFNetwork](#), [@NEAarts](#) and [@KCMAAA](#).
- Topics on Twitter are often grouped by hashtags. The official Creative Forces hashtag is **#CreativeForces**; use it to find others who are tweeting about Creative Forces programs and events, and help them find you. Add #CreativeForces to your tweets, and note it in your PR materials. You might also include #ArtsandMilitary and hashtags popular with military audiences such as #Military #MilitaryFamily #MilitaryFamilies #MilFam #MilLife #MilSpouse.
- Your Twitter frequency will vary based on the content you have to publish. Aim for 1–2 pre-written tweets/day. You can also increase your presence by retweeting (aka RT) interesting or relevant items that have been tweeted by your followers. It's also okay to send out a link you found on someone else's Twitter stream with your own take on it. (Just make sure to give them credit with "h/t" (hat-tip) or "via.")
- Include an image with your tweet whenever possible. Twitter will allow you to attach up to four images with a tweet. The image can include the Creative Forces logo or a photo that shows off the work your organization does. When selecting which images to include with your content, if you are using only one image, try to use one that is oriented horizontally so the platform won't cut the top off of your image.
- Content may include trivia or fun facts about your project; important dates about upcoming events; quotes from and about your field; provocative questions about your field; links to news about your organization, pictures from your events; blog updates, or press releases; or live tweet an event. You can also post videos of up to 140 seconds.
- Share your tweet by including #CreativeForces and cc [@NEA\\_CFNetwork](#). You can also tag accounts in your photos to save on character count!

## Facebook

- [Facebook](#) is an online community space; you can register for an organization page. Post status updates on the “Timeline,” and your fans/friends can respond with comments. A Facebook page is a great forum to solicit feedback, anecdotes, and photographs from Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant participants. You can set up your Facebook page to be private so only “friends” see your content, or make it public to all Facebook users, even those without Facebook accounts. Make sure to create a comment policy for your Facebook page.
- Update your Facebook status at least 1x/day. You can also pre-schedule posts to run at a time when your followers are most active on Facebook.
- Need content ideas? Consider hosting a special event for your Facebook fans or host a Facebook Live webchat with an artist or program administrator. Create “photo albums” from your events. You can also post video—try to aim for a length of 1–2 minutes.
- You are welcome to “like” [Creative Forces](#), the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), and [Mid-America Arts Alliance](#) Facebook pages, and you may also share our #CreativeForces content. Remember to “Tag” us when you post about #CreativeForces so we can follow your news.

## YouTube

- [YouTube](#) is an online community video platform, and can be a powerful way to promote your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant news. The average YouTube video is 1–2 minutes, so plan your videos accordingly.
- Viewers may comment on your videos and – if you allow it – share your video on other social media sites, extending your message.
- YouTube offers easy captioning options to make your videos more accessible.
- Organize your content. On your YouTube Channel, create playlists of particular topics to help viewers find videos of interest. You can set up your channel so that viewers can comment on you video, share it, or embed your video on their site.
- Fill out the “description” section in detail, and include a link to your website. Use YouTube video tags (descriptive words) to help viewers find your video when using the YouTube search engine.
- Need tips on producing a video? Search YouTube for thousands of “how-to” videos, or to find existing #CreativeForces videos.

## Instagram

- With the proliferation of camera phones, Instagram has become an easy way to share visual content. Instagram is a mobile-only platform (you’ll need a smartphone) and is geared toward capturing moments as they happen.

- You might Instagram inspirational quotes by artists featured in your programming, or do a series of snaps from your event. You can also post short videos on Instagram—for instance, a series of community reviews as people exit your event.
- Instagram content is easily shareable to both Facebook and Twitter, so it's a great way to get a lot of bang for your buck from one piece of visual content.
- Share your post by including #CreativeForces and cc [@NEACreativeForces](#). You can also tag these accounts in your photos.
- As with Twitter, images on Instagram are often grouped by hashtags, e.g. #CreativeForces #ArtsandMilitary #MilitaryFamily #MilitaryFamilies #MilFam. You can also investigate what your local military installation is using on their social media platforms. Be sure to pay careful attention to how any hashtag you're considering is being used to make sure it's appropriate for your organization.
- You can encourage members of your community to share photos from your events on their own Instagram feeds with the hashtag you've created. There are many tools available that will enable you to #regram, or share photos by other people on your organization's Instagram stream.

#### **Other Social Media Platforms**

- There are many more social channels to help share news about Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants. Is your local military audience on photo/video sharing platforms like LinkedIn, Snapchat, or Pinterest in addition to the above options? Consider those platforms to post or share photos or brief videos about your Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant project, special military family events, or programs. On platforms that use hashtags, make sure to tag your content with #CreativeForces to help people who are interested in the program find your content.

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## HOW TO USE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSAs)

### **Make the placement of public service announcements part of your publicity plan.**

Another promotional tool to consider is the public service announcement (PSA), which is an advertisement carried free of charge by local media (radio and TV) to publicize a message in the public interest.

- You may want to develop your own PSAs for broadcast use.
- Ask a local radio show host, mayor, or other public official to read your PSA.
- If you produce your own PSA for radio or TV, it should run either 15 or 30 seconds.
- Consider asking your community radio or TV stations to produce a PSA in support of Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant.

### **How to work with broadcast outlets.**

- Contact the public service manager of your local commercial and public broadcast outlets to ask how to submit a PSA for broadcast. Stations often air PSAs during non-peak broadcast times (after 11:00 pm or before 6:00 am), although stations sometimes have a policy of airing one PSA in each newscast.
- Contact university and public access cable broadcast outlets—including your local educational channel—that may have more flexibility with airtime.
- Because airtime for public service announcements is free, it is also highly competitive. If your budget allows, consider purchasing some ad time on a commercial station and asking for additional free time.
- Encourage a local commercial broadcast outlet to become a sponsor and to air the PSA as an in-kind contribution.

### **Ask non-media outlets to broadcast the PSAs.**

- Ask local schools to show the video PSA as part of a student assembly, or play the radio PSA, or read the PSA script during morning announcements.
- Ask playhouses, music venues, and other performing arts spaces to play a PSA before an event.
- Contact your local movie theaters about showing a Creative Forces PSA as part of pre-movie advertising.

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## **PARTNERING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO MAXIMIZE MEDIA INTEREST**

In some communities, states, and/or regions, multiple organizations were awarded Creative Forces Community Engagement Grant. Here are some tips and talking points to leverage this opportunity into more media exposure for your project.

### **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**

- The fact that organizations in your community were awarded Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants is a testament to the strength of the arts in your community/state/region.
- Consider making a joint announcement to state media, i.e. your state's Associated Press bureau, about all of your state's Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants, in addition to announcing your involvement locally. Then you can announce the kickoff for each event at the local level. Use 'power in numbers' as a story 'hook.' For example, "Organization A and Organization B were awarded Creative Forces Community Engagement Grants."
- Point out the different experiences that organizations will provide and how these experiences can be linked. For instance, a dance company may offer a performance featuring veterans while a museum might offer hands-on creative classes for military-related populations.

### **SELECTING MEDIA TARGETS**

- Consider coordinating your media outreach efforts with other organizations that received a grant. If you release a joint announcement, monitor your media efforts.
- Decide which outlets and reporters to target for your joint announcement (daily and weekly newspapers, local network TV affiliates, cable access channels, and online news outlets). If the organizations are in the same discipline, you may want to target national or regional outlets that cover that discipline.
- Increase the visibility of the team effort by sharing anecdotes and stories on your social media outlets, such as blogs, Twitter, and other platforms. Don't forget to tag @NEA\_CFNetwork and use #CreativeForces so we can see your posts and share them.

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