



Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the National Endowment for the Arts

These Guidelines for Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by the National Endowment for the Arts are prepared under the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, Section 515(b), and are designed to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility and integrity of information disseminated by the Endowment.

1. The Endowment has adopted a basic standard of quality (including objectivity, utility, and integrity) for all information that it disseminates. The Endowment has taken appropriate steps to incorporate information quality criteria into Endowment information dissemination practices.
2. As a matter of good and effective agency information resources management, the Endowment reviews the quality (including the objectivity, utility, and integrity) of information before it is disseminated. Information quality is integral to every step of the Endowment's development of information, including creation, collection, maintenance, and dissemination. The Endowment substantiates the quality of the information it has disseminated through documentation or other means appropriate to the information.
3. Generally, the office disseminating the information, such as the Office of Communications, the Office of Policy Research & Analysis, the Office of Guidelines and Panel Operations, or the Office of Congressional Liaison, will be responsible for reviewing the quality of information before dissemination, with appropriate oversight by the Endowment's Chairman or the Chairman's designees. The originating offices will use internal peer reviews and other review mechanisms to ensure that disseminated information meets quality standards set forth herein, including objectivity, utility, and integrity in both presentation and substance. Each office is responsible for ensuring that the pre-dissemination review is performed and documented at a level appropriate for the type of information disseminated.
4. To facilitate citizen review, affected persons may seek and obtain, where appropriate, timely correction of information maintained and disseminated by the Endowment that does not comply with these Endowment guidelines or with OMB's guidelines at 67 Federal Register at 8452 (Feb. 22, 2002).

- a. Requests for correction should be sent in writing, by mail, fax, or email to:

Information Change Request
 Office of General Counsel
 National Endowment for the Arts
 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20506
 (202) 682-5418
 (202) 682-5572 (fax)
ogc@arts.endow.gov

- b. The request should clearly identify the information asserted to be incorrect, including the name of the publication or other source of information, the date of issuance, and a detailed description of the information to be corrected. The request should state specifically why the information should be corrected (e.g.,

inaccuracy or other inconsistency with standards) and suggest specific changes. Requesters should be aware that they bear the burden of proving the necessity of both correction and the type of correction they seek. Requests for correction that are specific and provide evidence to support the need for correction will enable the agency to provide a satisfactory response.

- c. The request should include the requester's name, mailing address, fax number, email address, and telephone number, and how the requester is affected by the information error. The Endowment needs this information to respond to the request and to contact the requester as necessary.
- d. If a request does not reasonably describe the information asserted to be incorrect, the Endowment may request additional information.

5. The Endowment will investigate and respond to requests for correction in a flexible manner, taking into consideration the nature and extent of the complaint, the nature and timeliness of the information involved, the significance of the correction to the use of the information, and the magnitude of the correction needed. Should the Endowment determine that a correction is necessary, appropriate responses might include personal contacts by letter or telephone, press releases, website postings, errata sheets in publications, or mass mailings to correct a widely disseminated error or address a frequently raised complaint. The Endowment is not required to change the content or status of information simply based on the receipt of a request for correction. For example, the Endowment need not respond substantively to requests that are frivolous or repetitive, concern information not within these guidelines, or from a person whom the information does not affect.

6. The Endowment will generally notify the requester, in writing, of the agency decision on whether and how any corrections within 60 calendar days of receipt of the request. If the request requires more than 60 calendar days to be resolved, the agency will inform the complainant that more time is required and indicate the reason why and an estimated decision date. If the requester does not agree with the agency's decision regarding corrective action, the requester may file for reconsideration by the Chairman within 30 days of the Endowment's decision. Such reconsideration requests will generally be resolved within 45 business days.

7. The Endowment's pre-dissemination review, under paragraphs 2-3, applies to information that the Endowment first disseminates on or after October 1, 2002. The Endowment's administrative mechanisms, under paragraphs 4-6, apply to information that the Endowment disseminates on or after October 1, 2002, regardless of when the Endowment first disseminated the information.

8. The Chief Information Officer of the National Endowment for the Arts or his designee is responsible for Endowment compliance with pre-dissemination review under these guidelines. The General Counsel of the National Endowment for the Arts is responsible for resolution of requests for correction. The Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts is responsible for resolution of requests for reconsideration.

9. On an annual fiscal-year basis, the Endowment will submit a report to the Director of OMB providing information (both quantitative and qualitative, where appropriate) on the number and nature of complaints received by the Endowment regarding Endowment compliance with these guidelines and how such complaints were resolved. The Endowment will submit these reports no later than January 1 of each following year, with the first report due January 1, 2004.

10. Agency Information Quality Standards and Definitions

- a. "Quality" is an encompassing term comprising utility, objectivity, and integrity.

Therefore, the guidelines sometimes refer to these four statutory terms, collectively, as "quality."

- b. "Utility" refers to the usefulness of the information to its intended users, including the public. In assessing the usefulness of information that the Endowment disseminates to the public, the Endowment will consider the uses of the information not only from the perspective of the Endowment but also from the perspective of the public.
- c. "Objectivity" means ensuring that information is accurate, reliable, and unbiased, and that disseminated information is presented in an accurate, clear, complete, and unbiased manner.
- d. "Integrity" refers to the security of information--protection of the information from unauthorized access or revision, to ensure that the information is not compromised through corruption or falsification.
- e. "Information" means any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts or data, in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual forms. This definition includes information that the Endowment disseminates from a web page, but does not include the provision of hyperlinks to information that others disseminate. This definition does not include opinions, where the Endowment's presentation makes it clear that what is being offered is an individual's opinion rather than fact or the Endowment's views.
- f. "Government information" means information created, collected, processed, disseminated, or disposed of by or for the Federal Government.
- g. "Information dissemination product" means any book, paper, map, machine-readable material, audiovisual production, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristic, the Endowment disseminates to the public. This definition includes any electronic document, CD-ROM, or web page.
- h. "Dissemination" means Endowment initiated or sponsored distribution of information to the public in all media and formats. Dissemination does not include:
 1. distribution intended only for government employees or Endowment contractors, grantees, or applicants; including intra- or inter-agency use or sharing of government information;
 2. responses to requests for Endowment records under the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, the Federal Advisory Committee Act or other similar law; or
 3. distribution limited to correspondence with individuals or persons, press releases, archival records, public filings, subpoenas or adjudicative processes.
- i. "Influential" when used in the phrase "influential statistical information" means the Endowment expects that information in the form of analytical results will likely have an important effect on the development of domestic or international government or private sector policies or will likely have important consequences for specific technologies, substances, products, or firms.

11. Information quality standards as described by OMB's final guidelines are incorporated by reference as agency policies and standards.

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