

How Saipan's Art Council NEA Grant
Ineligibility Affected Local Artists

Marian Angel Danga

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Dr. Kimberly Bunts Anderson

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GRANT INELIGIBILITY AND LOCAL ARTISTS

From the Flame Tree Festival to local Ukulele lessons, Saipan's Arts Council works to bring these events to the community, which helps facilitate the celebration and preservation of our island's culture. Besides the Arts Council, local artists contribute their time and talent for the community's cultural enrichment. Like most other organizations, money is needed to for future projects, and to help fund the many artists involved. Over the course of several years until just January of this year, the Arts Council was found to be ineligible for federal grants from the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) due to previous management issues and incorrectly submitted forms (*Chan, D. B. Saipan Tribune, 2016*). The goal of this research project is to investigate the Saipan Arts Council's monetary issues as of late and the artists affected by the Arts Council's grant ineligibility. This research project looks to detail the experiences and thoughts of the local artists who likely took the brunt of such an unfortunate incident. The student researcher plans to finish the report in approximately 6 weeks.

This research project can be done because there are published articles from the Saipan Tribune and Marianas Variety that can be used as sources in the research project, as well as published studies that present the ways that public funding affects the creative process. Below is a list of relevant non-academic and academic sources:

- [“Arts Council Loses Federal Funding Anew”](#) by Dennis B. Chan

This article was written in 2016 and reports on the NEA's unwavering decision stance on the Arts Council's ineligibility for grants until January of 2018.

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- [“Arts Council Not Eligible for NEA Funds Until 2018”](#) 2018 by Bryan Manabat

This article goes into a bit of detail as to why or how federal funding is used by the Arts Council.

- [“Arts Council Seeking Artists, Food Vendors”](#) by Jayson Camacho

Provides information as to what the Art Council does for the community and its collaborations with various artists.

- [“Arts Council Eyes Sending NMI Delegations to Guam Fair”](#) by Clarissa V. David

Provides further information as to what the Art Council does for local artists.

- [“The Impact of Public Funding on Creative Processes in Australia: Three case studies of visual artists”](#)

Details the ways in which 3 Australian artists’ artistic processes were affected by public funding.

- [“Funding is Elusive for Struggling Local Artists”](#)

Details the experiences of artists and how the creative process is affected by a lack of funding.

- [“Nearly \\$300,000 in funding for projects by Montreal-based Aboriginal artists, writers and organizations”](#)

Montreal-based aboriginal artists, writers and organizations receive funding and how it may be used.

- [“Financing Creativity: Crowdfunding as a New Approach for Theatre Projects.”](#)

Different ways in which the arts have been funded.

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The student researcher will create a 10 question survey that they plan to have approximately 40 NMC students take regarding their awareness of the Arts Council's role in their community, as well as the relationship between the organization's funding and the overall welfare of local artists. Written below are some questions that the student researcher plans to include in the survey, though it is subject to some revisions:

1. *Do you know what the Arts Council/Commonwealth Council of Arts and Culture is?*
2. *What do you think the Arts Council does for Saipan's local artists?*
3. *How often do you interact with/view/purchase artwork created by local artists?*
4. *How much have you enjoyed the Flame Tree Festival/other community events involving art and culture?*
5. *How involved are you with Saipan's arts? Other forms of creative mediums be it visual, musical, etc. count.*

The student researcher also has connections with local artists, can reach out to members of the Arts Council, and will also be able to inquire of more local artists that they can interview as well. The student researcher plans to gather the insight, knowledge and personal experiences of Art Council Board Members, Local Professional Artists, and the Art Teachers of Saipan schools who have lived through all or some of the years of the grant ineligibility. Here are a list of potential interviewees:

1. Mr. Elliot Gregory, Marianas High School Art Teacher
 - a. Former full time Professional Artist before becoming a teacher, will probably have personal experience.

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2. Ms. Paula Derrington, NMC Art Teacher
 - a. Has a lot of knowledge on the happenings associated with the Arts Council, may have much background information
3. Mr. Parker Y. Yobei, Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture Executive Director
 - a. Has been with the CCAC since 2006
4. Ms. Margaret R. Muña – Abick, Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture Federal Program Coordinator/Accountant IV
 - a. Manages much of the overall financial accounting operations for CCAC
5. Ms. Erica Trinidad, Administrative Assistant
 - a. Works closely with accountant in managing and allocating supplies.

The student researcher plans to complete all their research project within the span of about 6 weeks . Written below is their data collection schedule:

9/27	Create interview questions/topics
9/29	Contact the 7~ interviewees and arrange separate face to face interviews at least 1 or 2 weeks from then.
10/08	Conduct first 2 interviews
10/10	Conduct 3rd and 4th interview
10/12	Conduct 5th and 6th interview

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10/17	Conduct 7th interview
10/18	Compile/organize interview material

The student researcher believes that because of the significance that the Art Council poses to the continued promotion of local artists, this research project should be approved. They will find literature, schedule interviews and create a 10 question survey. They believe that data collection and writing will be done well within the time frame given. The student researcher believes that readers may better understand how the artists of Saipan have been affected by the Arts Council's ineligibility to receive federal funding.

References

Chan, D. B. (2016, June 09). Arts council loses federal funding anew. Retrieved September 28, 2018, from <https://www.saipantribune.com/index.php/arts-council-loses-federal-funding-anew/>