

Section 10 of the Act specifies that department and agency heads shall make adequate provisions for participation by the public in the activities of advisory committees, except to the extent a determination is made in writing by the department or agency head that a portion of an advisory committee meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with subsection (c) of section 552b of Title 5, United States Code (the Government in the Sunshine Act).

It is the policy of the National Endowment for the Arts to make the fullest possible disclosure of records to the public, limited only by obligations of confidentiality and administrative necessity. Consistent with this policy, meetings of the following Endowment advisory committees will be open to the public except for portions dealing with the review, discussion, evaluation, and/or ranking of grant applications: Arts Advisory Panel and the Federal Advisory Committee on International Exhibitions.

The portions of the meetings involving the review, discussion, evaluation and ranking of grant applications may be closed to the public for the following reasons:

The Endowment advisory committees listed above review and discuss applications for financial assistance. While the majority of applications received by the agency are submitted by organizations, all of the applications contain the names of and personal information relating to individuals who will be working on the proposed project. In reviewing the applications, committee members discuss the abilities of the listed individuals in their fields, the reputations of the listed individuals among their colleagues, the ability of the listed individuals to carry through on projects they start, and their background and performance. Consideration of these matters is essential to the review of the artistic excellence and artistic merit of an application.

Consequently, in the interest of meeting our obligation to consider artistic excellence and artistic merit when reviewing applications for financial assistance:

It is hereby determined in accordance with the provisions of section 10(d) of the Act that the disclosure of information regarding the review, discussion, evaluation, and ranking of applications for financial assistance as outlined herein is likely to disclose information of a personal nature the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Therefore, in light of the above, I have determined that the above referenced meetings or portions thereof, devoted to review, discussion, evaluation, and/or ranking of applications for financial assistance may be closed to the public in accordance with subsection (c)(6) of section 552b of Title 5, United States Code.

The staff of each committee shall prepare a summary of any meeting or portion not open to the public within three (3) business days following the conclusion of the meeting of the National Council on the Arts considering applications recommended by such committees. The summaries shall be consistent with the considerations that justified the closing of the meetings.

All other portions of the meetings of these advisory committees shall be open to the public unless the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts or a designee determines otherwise in accordance with section 10(d) of the Act.

The Panel Coordinator shall be responsible for publication in the **Federal Register** or, as appropriate, in local media, of a notice of all advisory committee meetings. Such notice shall be published in advance of the meetings and contain:

1. Name of the committee and its purposes;
2. Date and time of the meeting, and, if the meeting is open to the public, its location and agenda; and
3. A statement that the meeting is open to the public, or, if the meeting or any portion thereof is not to be open to the public, a statement to that effect.

The Panel Coordinator is designated as the person from whom lists of committee members may be obtained and from whom minutes of open meetings or open portions thereof may be requested.

Guidelines

Any interested person may attend meetings of advisory committees that are open to the public.

Members of the public attending a meeting will be permitted to participate in the committee's discussion at the discretion of the chairperson of the committee, if the chairperson is a full-time Federal employee; if the chairperson is not a full-time Federal employee then public participation will be permitted at the chairperson's discretion with the approval of the full-time Federal employee in attendance at the meeting in compliance with the order.

Dated: February 28, 2008.

Dana Gioia,

Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts.

Dated: March 14, 2008.

Kathy Plowitz-Worden,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. E8-5526 Filed 3-18-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7537-01-P

NATIONAL FOUNDATION ON THE ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES

National Endowment for the Arts; Determination of the Chairperson of the National Endowment for the Arts Regarding Potential Closure of Portions of Meetings of the National Council on the Arts

Section 6(f) of the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 951 *et. seq.*) authorizes the National Council on the Arts to review applications for financial assistance to the National Endowment for the Arts and make recommendations to the Chairperson.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (Pub. L. 92-463) governs the formation, use, conduct, management, and accessibility to the public of committees formed to advise the Federal Government. Section 10 of that Act directs meetings of advisory committees to be open to the public, except where the head of the agency to which the advisory committee reports determines in writing that a portion of a meeting may be closed to the public consistent with subsection (c) of section 552b of Title 5, United States Code (the Government in the Sunshine Act.)

It is the policy of the National Endowment for the Arts that meetings of the National Council on the Arts be conducted in open session including those parts during which applications are reviewed. However, in recognition that the Endowment is required to consider the artistic excellence and artistic merit of applications for financial assistance and that consideration of individual applications may require a discussion of matters such as an individual artist's abilities, reputation among colleagues, or professional background and performance, I have determined to reserve the right to close limited portions of Council meetings if such information is to be discussed. The purpose of the closure is to protect information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Closure for this purpose is authorized by subsection (c)(6) of

section 552b of Title 5, United States Code.

Additionally, the Council will consider prospective nominees for the National Medal of Arts award in order to advise the President of the United States in his final selection of National Medal of Arts recipients. During these sessions, similar information of a personal nature will be discussed. As with applications for financial assistance, disclosure of this information about individuals who are under consideration for the award would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Therefore, in light of the above, I have determined that those portions of Council meetings devoted to consideration of prospective nominees for the National Medal of Arts award may be closed to the public. Closure for these purposes is authorized by subsections (c)(6) of section 552b of Title 5, United States Code. A record shall be maintained of any closed portion of the Council meeting. Further, in accordance with the FACA, a notice of any intent to close any portion of the Council meeting will be published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 28, 2008.

Dana Gioia,
Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts.

Dated: March 14, 2008.

Kathy Plowitz-Worden,
Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. E8-5527 Filed 3-18-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7537-01-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of the Availability of a Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice of request for public comment on a Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the Ocean Observatories Initiative (OOI).

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) gives notice of the request for public comment on a Draft PEA for the OOI.

The Division of Ocean Sciences in the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO/OCE) has prepared a Draft PEA for the OOI, a multi-million dollar Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction effort intended to put moored and cable infrastructure in discrete locations in the coastal and global ocean. The Draft PEA is available for public comment for a 30-day period.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 18, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the Draft PEA are available upon request from: Dr. Shelby Walker, National Science Foundation, Division of Ocean Sciences, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22230; Telephone: (703) 292-8580. The Draft PEA is also available under Additional OCE Resources at the following website: <http://www.nsf.gov/div/index.jsp?div=OCE>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Shelby Walker, National Science Foundation, Division of Ocean Sciences, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22230. Telephone: (703) 292-8580.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Oceanographic research has long relied on research vessel cruises (expeditions) as the predominate means to make direct measurements of the ocean. Remote sensing (use of satellites) has greatly advanced abilities to measure ocean surface characteristics over extended periods of time. A major advancement for oceanographic research methods is the ability to make sustained, long-term, and adaptive measurements from the surface to the ocean bottom. "Ocean Observatories" are now being developed to further this goal. Building upon recent technology advances and lessons learned from prototype ocean observatories, NSF's Ocean Sciences Division (OCE) is proposing to fund the OOI, an interactive, globally distributed and integrated infrastructure that will be the backbone for the next generation of ocean sensors and resulting complex ocean studies presently unachievable. The OOI reflects a community-wide, national and international scientific planning effort and is a key NSF contribution to the broader effort to establish focused national ocean observatory capabilities through the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS).

The OOI infrastructure would include cables, buoys, deployment platforms, moorings, junction boxes, electric power generation (solar, wind, fuel cell, and/or diesel), and two-way communications systems. This large-scale infrastructure would support sensors located at the sea surface, in the water column, and at or beneath the seafloor. The OOI would also support related elements, such as unified project management, data dissemination and archiving, modeling of oceanographic processes, and education and outreach activities essential to the long-term success of ocean science. It would include the first U.S. multi-node cabled observatory; fixed and relocatable coastal arrays

coupled with mobile assets; and advanced buoys for interdisciplinary measurements, especially for data-limited areas of the Southern Ocean and other high-latitude locations.

The OOI design is based upon three main technical elements across global, regional, and coastal scales. At the global and coastal scales, moorings would provide locally generated power to seafloor and platform instruments and sensors and use a satellite link to shore and the Internet. Up to four Global-Scale Nodes (GSN) or buoy sites are proposed for ocean sensing in the Eastern Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The Regional-Scale Nodes (RSN) off the coast of Washington and Oregon would consist of seafloor observatories with various chemical, biological, and geological sensors linked with submarine cables to shore that provide power and Internet connectivity. Coastal-Scale Nodes (CSN) would be represented by the fixed Endurance Array, consisting of a combination of cabled nodes and stand-alone moorings, off the coast of Washington and Oregon, and the relocatable Pioneer Array off the coast of Massachusetts, consisting of a suite of stand-alone moorings. In addition, there would be an integration of mobile assets such as autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) and/or gliders with the GSN, RSN, and CSN observatories.

The NSF invites interested members of the public to provide written comments on this Draft PEA. Comments can be submitted to: Dr. Shelby Walker, National Science Foundation, Division of Ocean Sciences, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22230; Telephone: (703) 292-8580; or electronically at PEA-comments@nsf.gov.

Shelby Walker,

Associate Program Director, Ocean Technology and Interdisciplinary Coordination, Division of Ocean Sciences National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. E8-5474 Filed 3-18-08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-M

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

ACTION: Notice of the OMB review of information collection and solicitation of public comment.