1. **What is your vision for the future of your arts industry discipline or peer group look like? Describe how it will stay relevant, valuable and thrive in American’s rapidly changing communities.**

The future of jazz is no more predictable than that of any other art form, whether in terms of its popular success or aesthetic direction. But one can predict the circumstances in which, all other things being equal, jazz is likely to be a vibrant art form, irrespective of scale or content.

It needs a well articulated and healthy ecology underpinning it – that is a web of viable relationships between different individuals and organizations (for profit, non profit, and public sector) that nurtures both artists and audiences and ensures that there are plenty of opportunities for them to connect, both in-person and, of course, virtually.

This ecology requires:

- **Jazz to have a place in formal and informal education** that provides opportunities for jazz music and its history to be taught both in the context of performance and of appreciation - the music itself, how it intertwines with social history, and the life lessons one can draw from the relationships between improvisation and form, the collective and the individual, and tradition and innovation. At the college and graduate levels, jazz education should embrace a strong historical dimension. A sufficient, trained, and connected cohort of educators and band directors working nationally within the school system is needed to support this system.

- **A network of managers, agents and presenters** familiar with and confident in their ability to program and market jazz in clubs and concert halls of varying scale and character.

- **Viable business and technological models** that underpin and fuel the recording, marketing and distribution of recorded jazz, both in audio and increasingly video, for profit and non-profit organizations alike. The presenting and recording industry must be sufficiently capitalized to afford players a sustainable livelihood through performance fees and royalties, including more effectively monetized digitally distributed content.

- **A well-supported community of jazz listeners**, who engage in dialogue with organizations, managers, agents, presents, and musicians and informed journalists and critics who can guide them. Presenters and performers need to reach out to audiences in non-traditional spaces and rethink and reinforce efforts to acknowledge, play to, and engage with new audiences.
A broader system of welfare and medical insurance for individuals that renders the painfully necessary work of some social service organizations redundant.

This picture is neutral as to the aesthetics of jazz to come or the scale of activity.

2. What are the obstacles to achieving that vision?

When one compares reality to this abstract assertion of a healthy ecosystem, the picture is unbalanced. Opportunities for formal performance education have increased dramatically; but systematic audience development has not grown apace; digital distribution technologies allow artists with a low profile to reach large audiences digitally at a fraction of what it cost a decade ago, but the collapse of recording industry has left jazz, like other niche music forms, without a “star system” that permits the nurturing and exposure of the next cohort of artists who can fill larger venues. These issues are not – or at least not only – about levels of funding.

Any vision for the future of jazz as a vital and developing music needs to engage with the opportunities and challenges presented by changes in demographics, social networking and distribution technologies, and audience expectations – in particular audience expectations of a total experience over which they retain more control than in the traditional performance context. The National Endowment for the Arts "2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts," concludes that jazz audiences are shrinking and growing older. Jazz performance participation decreased for first time since the survey began with "attendance rates falling below what they were in 1982." Between 2002 and 2008, 28% fewer Americans attended a jazz performance. In the same years the median age of jazz audience members increased from 42 to 46; in 1982, the median age was 29.

Many of the underlying structural changes are probably going to continue in the same direction and possibly accelerate and it is clear that we are in a period of obligatory experimentation in which past only very partial indicator of future. Our capacity for experimentation is hobbled by lack of resources for speculative experimentation (venture capital) and a relatively limited capacity for collective action and benchmarking – especially following the demise of the IAJE. The efforts of APAP, the NEA, the Jazz Education Network and others to make good on this hole is important.

3. What are the strategies to overcome those obstacles and make that vision a reality?

A better common understanding of the ecology of the music is needed. We should form and reinforce communities of organizations, presenters, managers, and performers. We should strengthen the opportunities for industry players to share and learn from one another’s experience of marketing, audience development, and social networking. With clear communication, a robust support system, and shared values, we may overcome obstacles insurmountable alone.

Listeners must also be part of that community. Our audience today wants to participate more than passively consume. There must be most opportunity for amateur music making within the
existent system. Jazz can often feel exclusive and elitist to a newcomer; our outreach should break down this barrier. A greater emphasis K-12 education through adult education, in jazz appreciation and the history of jazz would grow and sustain this community.

To do this we must better understand audience participation. The NEA’s survey and other studies examine attendance. That narrow focus does not encompass the ways in which an audience participates. A better understanding of digital participation habits will clarify our current position and help make strategies for progress.

While these various communities grow, there should be continued experimentation with, and sharing of experience of, financially viable methods of digital promotion and distribution. New business models need to be explored that are not so ambivalent towards recorded and distributable media. Just as the wealth of jazz recordings made recently is promising, so too is the growing number of Americans whom enjoy art online. We need to figure out how to leverage the flurry of online activity to generate income streams for performers and to pull people toward live performance. Some corporations have keyed in to these changes. Apple announced on February 27th that users had downloaded 10 billion songs since the iTunes store opened in 2003; arts organizations for the most part are not a part of that virtual market.