

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Friday, October 24, 2025

10:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

On Location/Hybrid Meeting

San Bernardino County Museum
2024 Orange Tree Lane
Redlands, CA 92374

Online meeting access will be provided at:

<https://arts.ca.gov/about/council-meetings>

ASL Interpretation will be provided via Zoom.

Interpretación simultánea en español – transmisión de audio por Zoom.

10:00 A.M.	1. Call to Order	R. Messina Captor
10:00 A.M. (3 min)	2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum	C. Gutierrez
10:03 A.M. (2 min)	3. Land and Peoples Acknowledgement	G. Clarke
10:05 A.M. (1 min)	4. Community Agreements	R. Messina Captor L. Goodwin
10:06 A.M. (5 min)	5. Opening Remarks	R. Messina Captor
10:11 A.M. (9 min)	6. Welcome by: Alejandro Gutierrez Chavez, Arts Connection <i>Executive Director</i> David Myers, Director of San Bernardino County Museum	A. Gutierrez Chavez D. Myers
10:20 A.M. (5 min)	7. Chair's Report (TAB Q)	R. Messina Captor
10:25 A.M. (5 min)	8. Executive Director's Report (TAB R)	D. Brazell

10:30 A.M. (5 min)	9. VOTING ITEM: MINUTES (TAB S) <i>The Council will vote to approve the following minutes:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Meeting – September 26, 2025, Hybrid 	R. Messina Captor
10:35 A.M. (10 min)	10. STAFF PRESENTATION: PROGRAMS DATA OVERVIEW (TAB T)	R. Ratzkin
10:45 A.M. (60 min)	11. VOTING ITEM: PROGRAMS POLICY RECOMMENDATION (PROGRAMS TO OPEN IN FY 26-27) (TAB U) <i>Programs Policy Committee will provide recommendations to the Council on the policy recommendations for FY 2026-2027</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation (20 min) • Public Comment (20 min) • Discussion (20 min) 	G. Clarke C. Duarte
11:45 A.M. (20 min)	12. VOTING ITEM: 50th ANNIVERSARY LOGO (TAB V) <i>The Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee will provide recommendations to Council on proposed logos</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation (5 min) • Public Comment (5 min) • Discussion (10 min) 	R. Messina Captor N. Miner
12:05 P.M. (30 min)	WORKING LUNCH	
12:35 P.M. (15 min)	13. DISCUSSION & PRESENTATION: REPORT OUT ON CAC'S CURRENT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND RFP FOR NEXT PLAN (TAB W) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation (5 min) • Discussion (10 min) 	R. Hirabayashi D. Keehn

12:50 P.M. (45 min)	14. General Public Comment <i>Two forms of general public comment will be offered:</i> 1) <i>Comments will be accepted during the meeting in person or over Zoom.</i> 2) <i>Written comment submissions will also be accepted online prior to and up through 10 a.m. on the second business day following the close of the meeting.</i> <i>Live public comments will be limited to three minutes per person and 45 minutes in total, as allowed by Bagley-Keene.</i>	C. Gutierrez
1:35 P.M. (45 min)	15. DISCUSSION: COMMITTEE REPORTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary • Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Fundraising & Sponsorships (TAB X) • Ad Hoc Partnerships Committee (TAB Y) • Legislative Committee (TAB Z) 	R. Messina Captor N. Miner R. Stein L. Goodwin R. Messina Captor R. Stein
2:20 P.M. (5 min)	16. In Memoriam	L. Goodwin
2:25 P.M. (5 min)	17. Closing Remarks <i>Call for agenda items for December 12, 2025, Council Meeting – Visalia</i>	R. Messina Captor
2:30 P.M.	18. Adjournment	R. Messina Captor

**Agenda items included within this public notice may be added, removed or altered until 10 days prior to meeting time.*

1. *All times indicated and the orders of business are approximate and subject to change.*
2. *Any item listed on the agenda is subject to possible Council action.*
3. *A brief mid-meeting break may be taken at the call of the Chair.*
4. *The CAC retains the right to convene an advisory committee meeting pursuant to Government Code Sec. 11125 (d).*
5. *Public meetings held featuring a virtual/Zoom component will include online Spanish and ASL interpreters whenever possible. Should you need additional reasonable accommodations, please submit your request no later than October 20 at 5 p.m. Please direct your request to the Public Affairs Specialist, Kimberly Brown, at kimberly.brown@arts.ca.gov.*
6. *Public comment instructions will be provided at <https://arts.ca.gov/about/council-meetings/>*
7. *Arts and cultural organizations or coalitions that wish to be scheduled on an upcoming agenda must submit a request to info@arts.ca.gov outlining a synopsis of their work and their purpose for inclusion at a Council meeting. All requests will be sent to the Council Chair for consideration and may or may not be accepted and subsequently scheduled.*

TAB Q

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025

Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: Roxanne Messina Captor, Chair
RE: Council Chair Report

Freedom of artistic expression is not a privilege; it is essential to a strong and vibrant society. Without it, we risk losing the ability to see the world in new and different ways, tell stories representing the richness of our communities and connect across lines of difference. This is not an “either/or” paradigm, but rather an “also/and” one, which expands, rather than limits, what is possible.

In conversations with my colleagues in the arts, I sense deep anxiety about this moment. Many are already contending with pushback to their programming or bracing for challenges that may lie ahead. During these uncertain times, we must stand firmly with one another, especially with those who remain courageous in their artistic choices.

Over the past year the CAC has advanced its vision of a California where every person has access to arts, culture and creative expression, and we have made meaningful strides toward equity, inclusion, and statewide reach.

- One of our core priorities is to ensure that the arts serve communities across all 58 counties of California — including rural, inland and historically underserved areas. In April 2025, we officially opened the 2025 grant season, offering **seven distinct funding opportunities**, with an emphasis on supporting *first-time grantees* and *small organizations*.
- We also launched a new cohort for the 2025 Cultural Districts program. Through this initiative, communities can apply for combined technical assistance and state certification, with the aim of strengthening cultural ecosystems and local economies.
- Our General Operating Support grant program continues to prioritize smaller revenue organizations and prioritizes funds to those that would otherwise struggle to cover day-to-day operations. The program’s eligibility is structured to support organizations with revenue below specific thresholds.

While we have made meaningful progress, several challenges remain:

- Ensuring that every dollar invested stretches to reach communities that historically had limited access to arts funding.
- Supporting organizations through ongoing economic uncertainty and rising operational costs.
- Expanding partnerships across sectors (education, health, workforce) so that arts and culture are integrated as core components of community resilience and civic life.

Together, we are shaping a California where arts, culture and creative expression flourish for everyone.

TAB R

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Strengthening arts, culture,
and creative expression as the
tools to cultivate a better
California for all.

Gavin Newsom, **Governor**
Danielle Brazell, **Executive Director**
2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
(916) 322-6555 | www.arts.ca.gov

October 24, 2025

Dear Members of the Arts Council,

As I prepare to celebrate my second anniversary as the Executive Director of the California Arts Council, it is my pleasure to provide this report which contains an articulated framework of the roles we each play in advancing the arts in California; a Situational Analysis of the context in which we are operating; an update on the agency's programs, and changes to existing processes. It also includes a recommendation on ways to better coordinate Council decisions with the agency's capacity.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Arts and cultural organizations are feeling the effect of a system-wide retraction of resources provided at the local, state, and national levels. This includes the cancellation of grant awards from the National Endowment of the Arts, as well as reductions of public funding at the local level.

The retraction of federal funds to California is having an impact on the state's revenue outlook. The agency's annual appropriation has remained flat from FY24-25, and with the current fiscal outlook it is unclear what impact that will have on the Local Assistance budget for the next fiscal year (FY26-27).

As reported last month, the agency is operating at full capacity. Staff are collaborating and coordinating work effectively across work units. Staff will continue striving for effective coordination and collaboration with Council to ensure that the policy decisions made by Council are feasible in terms of capacity (resources, staffing, and timelines).

COLLABORATION & COORDINATION

As the appointed oversight body, the Arts Council has broad policy authority over the agency's strategic plan, local assistance programs, and allocations of annual state appropriations to those programs. The Council is charged with making decisions that benefit all Californians fairly and equitably. Council members have a diverse knowledge of the arts and cultural field which informs committee recommendations and council policy. Its business meetings are publicly noticed, subject to Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act,

accessible to the public, and take place in communities throughout the state up to eight times a year.

Under the direction of the executive director, staff implement long-range plans and manage programs and services of the agency. The Director oversees staffing, programs, services, and ensures both staff and the Council adhere to state rules and regulations. Staff is also deeply knowledgeable of the arts and cultural field and serves to advise on the policies enacted by Council.

Together we strive to serve the people of California fairly and equitably. Accomplishing this commitment requires effective collaboration between the policy-setting body (Council) and the implementation engine (staff) with input and feedback from interested and affected parties (artists, cultural tradition bearers, and arts administrators).

My goal in articulating this framework is to reinforce the important role you play in advancing the arts in California and to bolster our shared commitment to making informed decisions based on mission-aligned policy goals and transparent processes with sufficient resources and capacity. It is also to help inform your decision-making as a formal public policy oversight body.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS

In December, the Council will vote in a new Chair and Vice Chair for 2026 and approve the dates and locations of its business meetings so that staff can effectively plan accordingly. Informing the Chair (and Executive Director) of any conflicts prior to adopting the dates and locations will secure quorum. This will ensure staff have ample planning, resources, time, and logistical support required to produce a successful public meeting.

The Nomination Committee is responsible for administering the process which will begin in November. Members can self-nominate or nominate a member of Council. Nominations should be sent to the Executive Director, who will share all nominations with the committee. The Nominating Committee, with support from staff, will prepare a report to be included in the December Council book of all nominations for the two positions. The report will not include the number of nominations received. At the December Council meeting, the Nominating Committee administers the process by reading the memo and introducing the slate of nominees for both the Chair and Vice Chair positions.

PROCESS CHANGES

Beginning in December, Committee recommendations will begin to include an objective staff analysis section based on available program data and current agency resources in addition to the Decision Support Tool. This objective analysis will better equip Council to make sound and informed decisions that benefit all Californians fairly and equitably and reinforce the dynamic collaboration between agency staff and the appointed policy oversight body.

In the new year, the agency will introduce new processes for Council to submit travel reimbursements. We are also building a new web-based resource where Council members can access forms, links to mandatory training, and other resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2026, the agency will celebrate its 50th anniversary, open and adjudicate a new round of grant programs, produce Poetry Out Loud, the Poet Laureate's 10-year anthology, the Arts Awards, and launch a new strategic planning process. We will also release the Creative Economy plan, the first sector specific strategy to advance the creative sector in California. The rollout of this plan will include over 20 town hall events produced by six regional leads. The agency will implement robust technical assistance engagement in communities throughout the state to fulfill our shared commitment to serving every community in California.

Capacity: As Council prepares to make decisions for which programs to open in 2026, I encourage you to consider opening general operating programs in two-year cycles, moving cultural districts to a biannual program and minimizing significant changes to the guideline's framework. Staggering the programs will also allow staff time to review final reports and prepare the analysis to Council. Adopting these recommendations will ensure effective implementation of services.

December Council Meeting: Considering the challenges in securing quorum for meetings outside major cities, I recommend the December 14, 2025, Council meeting be moved to Sacramento. This will ensure that members will be able to travel and return home on the same day if needed.

PROGRAMS

Below is a brief update on several current and future programs in the works.

- **Poetry Out Loud** – In partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Out Loud is now in its 21st year. The NEA provides support for state-level programs across the U.S. to be administered via state arts agencies. The California Arts Council subsequently provides funding to its State Local Partners each year to produce Poetry Out Loud competitions within their counties. California has the largest program in the nation, with more than 4,000 students participating annually.

Historically, the program was conducted in partnership with the Poetry Foundation, which in addition to providing monetary resources, provided access to a vast catalog of poetry from poets throughout time and the world. However, in recognition of America's 250th anniversary in 2026, the 2025-2026 Poetry Out Loud program has been revised to align with America's 250th anniversary, and as such will focus on poems that celebrate the rich tapestry of American history and culture. The new anthology, which features poems written by artists before 1929, will be considered at the national competition.

The new anthology is far more limited in scale, scope, and quality. Poetry Out Loud program staff in collaboration with the executive team are grappling with this change and are considering options to ensure the students participating in this program continue to have access to the highest caliber of educational materials while maintaining compliance with the new rules.

- **FY2025-26 Grant Award Notifications** – Agency staff sent award and declination notifications to all applicants. As reported last month, over 2,396 eligible applications were received, and 679 received a grant award. This process began in February when the Council adopted its Guidelines Framework and will conclude by December 31, when all grantees have signed their grant agreements.
- **50th Anniversary** – Upon approval of the Fundraising Plan and Arts Award Criteria and Process, agency staff have:
 - ✓ Released the Invitation for Nominations to Council and CAC's State and Local Partner program
 - ✓ Finalized the fundraising toolkit and launched Council's fundraising campaign
 - ✓ Finalized the 50th Anniversary Branding and Graphic Design Treatment
 - ✓ Request for Proposal (RFP) for the event producer is in progress
 - ✓ Sent engagement letters to former Council members on behalf of the Chair inviting their attendance at the April 2026 event
 - ✓ Developed initial prospective donor list and submission form for Council members
 - ✓ Invited current grantees to propose an event, exhibition, performance, and/or festival

With these items completed, staff will continue to support the Council in their efforts to raise the funds for the Awards Ceremony event in April 2026. Should insufficient funds be raised, the event will be scaled accordingly.

- **Cultural Districts** – Staff are on track to complete the adjudication process for the next round of 10 cultural districts. The slate of recommendations will be presented to Council at its December meeting in accordance with the initial timeline.
- **Arts in Corrections** – As reported in the ED report in September, the agency is on track to release a new RFP this month. This will ensure there is no gap in service delivery. The agency has also reassigned program staff to ensure regular communications and feedback loops with contractors and California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).
- **Poet Laureate Anthology** – Per California Poet Laureate establishing law, the CAC has been directed by the Legislature to publish – every 10 years – an anthology featuring examples of the work of the state and local poets laureate of the past

decade. In addition to the publication, the CAC works with poets laureate around the state to host a series of readings from the publication to build awareness and to highlight poets laureate in their regions. The first (and most recent) anthology was *Sometimes in the Open: Poems from California's Poets Laureate*, featuring works from more than three dozen current and former city, county, state, and federal (from CA) poets laureate. We were forced to pause due to the pandemic but are thrilled to be preparing for the publication of the next anthology in 2026!

CLOSING

As the state arts agency for California, we are bound to serve the people of California fairly and equitably in accordance with state rules, regulations, executive orders, and the agency's strategic framework. Accomplishing these goals when our federal partners make midyear changes to existing programs that contradict our values presents new challenges and require dynamic creative solutions.

I am buoyed by the resilience of our local partners who are navigating this terrain as well. As field practitioners we must continue to lead with a bold vision for the future that is inclusive, representative, and highly imaginative.

Respectfully submitted,



Danielle Brazell
Executive Director

TAB S

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Strengthening arts, culture,
and creative expression as the
tools to cultivate a better
California for all.

Gavin Newsom, **Governor**
Danielle Brazell, **Executive Director**
Roxanne Messina Captor, **Council Chair**
2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
(916) 322-6555 | www.arts.ca.gov

**Minutes of Public Meeting
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL
Friday, September 26, 2025
10 A.M. – 2:45 P.M.
On Location/Hybrid Meeting
SOMArts
934 Brannan Street
San Francisco, CA 94103**

The members of the California Arts Council convened in San Francisco and via web conference to discuss and vote on various items as listed in the minutes below.

Council Members Present In-Person:

Council Chair Roxanne Messina Captor
Council Vice Chair Leah Goodwin
Council Member Caleb Duarte
Council Member Vicki Estrada
Council Member Roy Hirabayashi
Council Member Alex Israel
Council Member Dorka Keehn
Council Member Phil Mercado
Council Member Nicola Miner
Council Member Rick Stein

Council Members Present Remotely:

Council Member Gerald Clarke

Arts Council Staff Present:

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director
Sylvia Britt, Deputy Director
Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services
Carissa Gutierrez, Director of Public Affairs
Elisa Gollub, Arts Program Manager
Josy Miller, Arts Program Manager
Jonathan Estrada, Arts Program Manager

Megan Morgan, Race & Equity Manager
Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures & Evaluation Manager
Kimberly Brown, Public Affairs Specialist
Qiana Moore, Events & Outreach Coordinator
Zachary Hill, IT Specialist
Steve Mok, Public Affairs Specialist

1. Call to Order

Chair Messina Captor called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Public Affairs Director called the roll and quorum was established. All 11 members of the council were present.

3. Land and People's Acknowledgement

Chair Messina Captor invited Council member Clarke to share about California Indian Day. Council member Clarke informed attendees that various cultural gatherings would be taking place with tribal communities across the state and encouraged participation.

Council member Hirabayashi then delivered the California Arts Council Land Acknowledgement.

4. Community Agreements

Chair Messina Captor and Vice Chair Goodwin lead the Council through the community agreements.

The community agreements read aloud were as follows:

- Practice listening to understand, not just hearing.
- Wait until you are acknowledged to speak.
- When it's your time to speak, state your name and intention clearly.
- Listen to others with an open mind. Try not to project your truth onto others.
- Practice both/and thinking rather than either/or thinking.
- Have a beginner's mind. Take 100% responsibility for one's own learning.
- It's okay to disagree—disagree with ideas, not with the person.

5. Opening Remarks

Chair Messina Captor opened with welcoming attendees and thanking staff and the public. The Chair acknowledged the recent site tours lead by cultural district leaders for Calle 24 and SOMA Pilipinas. She then introduced Maria Jensen of SOMAarts for her partnership.

6. Welcome by Maria Jensen of SOMAarts and Ebon Glenn, San Francisco Arts Commission (State-Local Partner)

Maria Jensen, SOMArts Maria Jensen welcomed the CAC to Soma Arts on Native American Day, acknowledging the land and the need for mutual respect. She shared two key quotes, one on complex times and an Angela Davis quote on the practice of radical transformation. Jensen

highlighted upcoming Soma Arts events, including the Dia de los Muertos exhibition and the Luminous Ball, while noting the organization's ongoing funding challenges.

Eben Glenn welcomed the CAC on behalf of the SFAC, noting their role as a state-local partner. He highlighted SFAC's success in funding over 150 San Francisco artists and organizations this year. Glenn emphasized that in uncertain times, people turn to the arts, concluding, "We are stronger together" in supporting the arts community.

7. Chair's Report

The [Chair's report](#) can be read in its entirety here and emphasized the arts' vital role in community health and as powerful \$230 billion economic engine for California.

8. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Danielle Brazell delivered highlights from [her full report](#) where she noted the agency's upcoming 50th anniversary celebration in 2026. She then provided staffing updates, the return of Chief Deputy Michelle Radman from maternity leave, and introducing new staff members: Sylmia Britt, as the new deputy director of the agency overseeing internal operations and budget management, and Matthew Canty (Legislative Manager). She also announced the promotion of Jonathan Estrada to Arts Manager. She then concluded by thanking the entire "small but mighty" CAC staff for their hard work in preparing the Council for the day's critical decisions.

9. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings

Chair Messina Captor then presented the [minutes from June 20th](#). Chair Messina Captor abstained from the vote as she was not present at the June 20th council meeting.

As there were no objections from the rest of the Council, the minutes were approved.

10. VOTING ITEM: FY25-26 Grant Cycle Allocations

The Council proceeded to Agenda Item 10: on the FY25-26 Grant Cycle Allocations in which the Allocations Committee presented award strategies for 25-26 grantees. Parliamentarian Robert "Bob" Duitsman reviewed conflict of interest bylaws, citing Robert's Rules of Order and the California State Ethics Code, advising recusal from discussion and voting without requiring council members to leave the dais. [Councilmember Mercado presented two recommended funding scenarios](#) (Scenario 1 and Scenario 2), both incorporating priorities for small organizations, first-time grantees, and those serving low HPI communities, noting a \$10 million state budget reduction impacting the \$19.5 million allocation. A motion was made and seconded to approve Scenario 2, which invests more heavily in General Operating Support for arts and cultural organizations, along with delegating remaining funds to the Executive Director's discretion.

Motion:

Made by: Council Member Keehn

Seconded by: Council Member Mercado

The Allocations Committee recommends that Council approve the following scenario for funding amounts for the seven open grant programs per the attached spreadsheets:

SCENARIO 2:

- **\$3,594,431 – State-Local Partners (2nd Year with one additional grantee)**
- **\$145,000 – State-Local Partner Mentorship**
- **\$6,116,350 – Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Support**
- **\$828,415 – Administering Organizations – Folk and Traditional Arts**
- **\$4,200,000 – Administering Organizations – Individual Artist Fellowships**
- **\$2,696,964 – Arts and Youth**
- **\$1,951,841 – Impact Projects**

The Committee further recommends that the Council approve the Executive Director to award grants at her discretion from any Local Assistance funds not allocated by Council as well as any funds remaining from terminated grants.

Made by: Council Member Keehn

Seconded by: Council Member Mercado

Public Comment noted below at the end of the minutes.

Discussion:

The Council's discussion centered on choosing between two funding scenarios amid a significant shortfall (\$19 million available vs. \$129 million requested). One perspective favored Scenario 2, emphasizing its balanced support for General Operating Support (GenOps), a critical need identified by the community, and its potential to sustain more small organizations. Proponents of this view noted that GenOps funding is typically harder for non-profits to secure than project-based funding. The opposing viewpoint advocated for Scenario 1, which provides more funding to the Arts and Youth Program, seen as a vital investment for future arts engagement. Staff clarified that under both scenarios, the Arts and Youth Program's uncapped awards often benefit larger organizations. Questions were raised about the impact of consolidating the State Regional Network (SRN) program into GenOps and whether a single organization should receive funding from multiple categories, which staff confirmed is currently permissible by policy. Ultimately, a leaning emerged toward Scenario 2 to prioritize keeping the doors open for struggling small organizations across the state.

Chair Messina Captor then called for a vote.

Motion:

Made by: Council Member Keehn

Seconded by: Council Member Mercado

The Allocations Committee recommends that Council approve the following scenario for funding amounts for the seven open grant programs per the attached spreadsheets:

SCENARIO 2:

- **\$3,594,431 – State-Local Partners (2nd Year with one additional grantee)**
- **\$145,000 – State-Local Partner Mentorship**
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- **\$828,415 – Administering Organizations – Folk and Traditional Arts**

- \$4,200,000 – Administering Organizations – Individual Artist Fellowships
- \$2,696,964 – Arts and Youth
- \$1,951,841 – Impact Projects

The Committee further recommends that the Council approve the Executive Director to award grants at her discretion from any Local Assistance funds not allocated by Council as well as any funds remaining from terminated grants.

Vote Tally:

- Clarke – no
- Duarte – no
- Estrada - no
- Hirabayashi – recusal
- Israel - yes
- Keehn - yes
- Mercado – yes
- Miner – yes
- Stein – recusal
- Vice Chair Goodwin – abstain
- Chair Messina Captor - no

Result: Motion failed (4 yay – 4 nay – 3 recusal/abstention) simple majority = 5 of 8

NEW MOTION:

Made by: Council Member Duarte

Seconded by: Council Member Messina Captor

The Allocations Committee recommends that Council approve the following scenarios for funding amounts for the seven open grant programs per the attached spreadsheets:

SCENARIO 1:

- \$3,624,721 – State-Local Partners (SLP) (2nd Year with one additional grantee)
- \$145,000 – State-Local Partner Mentorship (SLP-M)
- \$3,559,680 – Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Support (GEN)
- \$828,415 – Administering Organizations – Folk and Traditional Arts (FTA)
- \$4,200,000 – Administering Organizations – Individual Artist Fellowships (IAF)
- \$4,076,626 – Arts and Youth (AAY)
- \$3,098,558 – Impact Projects (PRJ)

The Committee further recommends that the Council approve the Executive Director to award grants at her discretion from any Local Assistance funds not allocated by Council as well as any funds remaining from terminated grants.

Vote Tally:

- Clarke – yes
- Duarte – yes
- Estrada - yes
- Hirabayashi – refusal
- Israel - no
- Keehn - no
- Mercado – yes
- Miner – no
- Stein – refusal
- Vice Chair Goodwin – yes
- Chair Messina Captop - yes

Result: Motion PASSES (6 yay – 3 nay – 2 refusal/abstention) simple majority = 6 of 10

12. VOTING ITEM: 50th Anniversary Fundraising & Sponsorship Plan

Item 11 on the agenda was moved down and Item 12 was presented first.

The Council returned to the agenda to address the vote on the [50th Anniversary fundraising and sponsorship plan](#). A committee, in conjunction with staff, developed a strategy to raise between \$150,000 and \$200,000 entirely through private support to fund the 2026 celebration event. The fundraising effort is designed to invite participation from all Californians, from dollar donations up to large sponsorships, and will leverage outreach to over 100 past Council members. It was stressed that the solicitation process must be launched immediately as the State cannot advance funds for event costs, requiring money to be in hand to pay the event planner and other expenses. To ensure transparency, contributions will be accepted through an established state mechanism, and all solicitations will explicitly state that gifts have no bearing on grant decisions or the donor's relationship with the agency. Council members will transition from the ad hoc committee to the full Council to participate in the fundraising efforts, with progress updates provided at each future Council meeting.

The motion to approve the 50th Anniversary Awards Ceremony Fundraising Strategy and Plan was put forward for a vote.

Motion:

Made by: Council Member Mercado

Seconded by: Council Member Stein

To approve the 50th Anniversary Award Ceremony Fundraising Strategy and Plan.

Public Comment

Public comment was opened to both in-person attendees and virtual participants. No in-person or virtual public comments were received for this item. The public was reminded that written comments could still be submitted online for the Council's review.

Discussion

The Chair invited members to discuss. Seeing no hands, the Chair asked for the vote.

Motion:

Made by: Council Member Mercado

Seconded by: Council Member Stein

To approve the 50th Anniversary Award Ceremony Fundraising Strategy and Plan.

Vote Tally:

- Clarke – yes
- Duarte – yes
- Estrada - yes
- Hirabayashi – yes
- Israel - yes
- Keehn - yes
- Mercado – yes
- Miner – yes
- Stein – yes
- Vice Chair Goodwin – yes
- Chair Messina Captor - yes

Result: Motion PASSES (11 yay – 0 nay) simple majority = 6 of 11

11. VOTING ITEM: 50th Anniversary Awardees Criteria, Process, and Award Design

The 50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee [presented their memo](#), plan and budget. The Council reviewed the plan for the 50th Anniversary celebration, which includes honoring up to 10 artists/leaders/organizations via a nomination and Council voting process. The award statuette was presented, designed by a Council member as a symbolic surfboard fin, representing California culture and progress. This event, scheduled for April 2026 in Sacramento, aims to celebrate the agency's 50 years of impact. Finally, three initial logo designs were presented for feedback, focusing on themes of modernity, history, and forward momentum.

Motion:

The Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee recommends the Council approve the following:

- a. Award Selection Process and Criteria**
- b. Award Design Concept**

Made by: Council Member Messina Captor

Seconded by: Council Member Miner

Public Comment

Public comment was opened to both in-person attendees and virtual participants. No in-person or virtual public comments were received for this item. The public was reminded that written comments

could still be submitted online for the Council's review.

Discussion

The Council debated three 50th Anniversary logo concepts, leaning toward the golden/ribbon design but asking for revisions to include the "state agency" designation and different color backgrounds.

Council member Israel proposed simplifying the nomination process by eliminating external partners and limiting nominations to one per Council member. Members defending the original process stressed the importance of transparency and statewide inclusion. A substitution to the original motion was proposed.

SUBSTITUTION:

The Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee recommends the Council approve the following:

a. Award Selection Process and Criteria

- b. The award process and criteria (attached) provide all council members with the opportunity to nominate up to two Californian artists, arts leaders, and/or arts organizations. ~~State and Local partners will also be invited to nominate one from the County they represent. Combined, these nominations will generate a pool of approximately one hundred extraordinary nominees. A panel comprised of two council members, and the Executive Director will review and score the nominations based on the CAC's panel ranking process, narrowing the initial list to twenty. A pool of twenty will be presented to the Council, which will vote in a closed session to select the final cohort of awardees at its December meeting.~~

c. Award Design Concept

Made by: Council Member Israel

Seconded by: Council Member Estrada

Vote Tally:

- Clarke – no
- Duarte – no
- Estrada - yes
- Hirabayashi – no
- Israel - yes
- Keehn – abstain
- Mercado – no
- Miner – no
- Stein – no
- Vice Chair Goodwin – no
- Chair Messina Captor - no

Result: Motion failed (2 yay -8 nay – 1 abstain)

The vote then reverted to the original motion. The Chair called for the vote.

Motion:

The Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee recommends the Council approve the following:

- a. Award Selection Process and Criteria**
- b. Award Design Concept**

Made by: Council Member Messina Captor

Seconded by: Council Member Miner

Vote Tally:

- Clarke – yes
- Duarte – yes
- Estrada - yes
- Hirabayashi – yes
- Israel - yes
- Keehn – yes
- Mercado – yes
- Miner – yes
- Stein – yes
- Vice Chair Goodwin – yes
- Chair Messina Captor - yes

Result: *Motion passed unanimously (11 yay – 0 nay)*

12:45-1:15 WORKING LUNCH

13. DISCUSSION: 2026 Programs

In anticipation for the Programs Policy Committee's recommendation to select which programs to open for funding in 2026, Director of Programs, Kristin Margolis, and Arts Manager, Elisa Gollub [provided a presentation](#) and facilitated a conversation to collect inquiries from the Council. Director of Programs, Margolis noted that due to the drop in successful grant applications from 77% in 2022 (with one-time funds) to just 22% in 2024, future decisions face tough trade-offs between stability and reach. To support these upcoming decisions, Council members requested a wide range of program data, specifically focusing on geographic distribution, re-granting activity, and the impact of consolidating programs like the State-Regional Networks.

Staff collected feedback and an assessment of the data requests will be made and shared at the next public meeting of the Council.

14. Committee/ Ad Hoc Updates

Council members Keehn and Hirabayashi shared the [Strategic Framework memo](#).

Council members Estrada and Hirabayashi reported on [Equity Committee's activities](#).

15. DISCUSSION: 2026 Council Meeting Dates

Chair Messina Captor had asked the Council to review the dates provided in the council book but in the interest of time, this item has been tabled for a future council meeting.

16. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment

All public comment listed at the end of these minutes.

17. In Memoriam

Vice Chair Goodwin led a tribute honoring individuals who passed away since June 20, 2025.

The "In Memoriam" section honored the following artists and advocates who have passed:

- Cara Q. Smith (June 17): Cultural policy expert and former Manager of Programs for California Arts.
- Walter Scott (June 26, age 81): American R&B singer, member of The Whispers.
- Patricia Rodriguez (June 30, age 80): Trailblazing Chicana muralist, artist, and educator.
- Michael Madsen (July 3, age 67): American actor (*Reservoir Dogs*, *Kill Bill Vol. 1*).
- Carla Maxwell (July 6, age 79): American dancer and Artistic Director of the José Limón Dance Company.
- Andrea Gibson (July 14, age 49): American performance artist and poet.
- Alan Bergman (July 17, age 99): Academy Award-winning lyricist ("The Way We Were").
- Connie Francis (July 17, age 87): American singer ("Where the Boys Are").
- Malcolm-Jamal Warner (July 20, age 54): American actor and director, notably Theo on *The Cosby Show*.
- Chuck Mangione (July 22, age 84): Grammy-winning jazz flugelhorn player ("Feels So Good").
- Ozzy Osbourne (July 22, age 76): English heavy metal vocalist from Black Sabbath.
- David Avalos (July 23, age 78): Chicano activist, artist, and Professor Emeritus of Art.
- Ebony McKinney (July 27, age 41): Tireless advocate for arts diversity and community unity.
- Jeannie Seely (August 1, age 85): American country music singer ("Don't Touch Me").
- Kelly Mack (August 2, age 33): American actress (*The Walking Dead*).
- Loni Anderson (August 3, age 79): American actress (*WKRP in Cincinnati*).
- Eddie Palmieri (August 6, age 88): American Latin jazz pianist, bandleader, and composer.
- Bobby Whitlock (August 10, age 77): Rock singer and keyboardist from Derek and the Dominoes.
- Dave Ketchum (August 10, age 97): American character actor (*Get Smart*).
- Sheila Jordan (August 11, age 96): American jazz singer and songwriter.
- Tom Shipley (August 24, age 84): American folk rock singer and songwriter.
- Mark Volman (September 5, age 78): Singer-songwriter from The Turtles ("Happy Together").
- Rick Davies (September 6, age 81): British rock vocalist and keyboardist from Supertramp.
- Polly Holliday (September 9, age 88): American actress, known as Flo Castleberry on *Alice*.
- Bobby Hart Harshman (September 10, age 86): American pop singer ("I'm Not Your Stepping Stone").
- Robert Redford (September 16, age 89): Actor, Academy Award-winning director, and climate activist.
- Brett James (September 18, age 57): Grammy-winning country music songwriter.

- Sonny Curtis (September 20, age 88): Guitarist and singer-songwriter from The Crickets.
- Agnes Gund (N/A date or age): Arts patron and former Board Chair of the Museum of Modern Art.

18. Closing Remarks

Chair Messina Captor concluded the meeting by thanking SOMArts for hosting the event and expressing appreciation for all the public comments received, both in-person and via Zoom. She announced that the next Council meeting is scheduled for October 24th in San Bernardino, with all relevant information available on the Council's website.

19. Adjournment

Chair Messina Captor adjourned the meeting at 2:45PM.

Public Comment

Item 10: 25-26 Grant Allocations Public Comment

Public Comments on Funding Scenario 2 Motion

Liz Luke, Executive Director of Living Jazz

"Good afternoon, Council, and thank you for your time and your careful consideration. There's no win-win in this scenario. My name is Liz Luke, I'm the Executive Director of Living Jazz, and I also serve on the Board of California for the Arts and Arts Advocates, but today I'm here with my Living Jazz hat on.

We are currently in 16 schools—last year, that was 21 schools—where we provide free jazz-rooted music and dance education, at the intersection of social justice. We've had to make cuts like many organizations over the last year, especially when forecasting. In addition to the schools that we serve, we provide two summer camps, one for youth, one for adults.

Just echoing what Chair Messina Kaptur was saying, our country's under attack right now. It is freedom of speech, but it's also places for people to have different opinions to come to the table. That is the difference between entertainment and culture. Today, I ask that you consider Scenario 2 to fund the most number of these places where people of differing opinions can come together, because in my opinion, that is what is under attack, and if we share those same values as a council, as a community, as the state of California, we need to protect as many spaces as possible with this, and in my opinion, Scenario 2 backs that. So, thank you for your time."

Jenny Belisle, Executive Founding Director of Arts CCC (Arts Contra Costa County)

"Hello, my name is Jenny Belisle, and I am the Executive Founding Director of Arts CCC, which is Arts Contra Costa County. Just last year, on February 6th of 2024, our Board of Supervisors designated ArtsCCC and our fiscal sponsor, Independent Arts and Media, to serve as the county's arts agency. As we move forward, our top priority is an equitable and sustainable arts foundation for Contra Costa.

As the new arts agency, we are so grateful for your support for the State-Local Program. It has made our work possible. We have created a comprehensive county arts profile, highlighting artists, art organizations, venues, public artworks, and we encourage the arts community to create a profile. Our signature programs include a poetry series program for Juvenile hall youth, our Poetry Out Loud

program, our District Arts Partner Program, where we are supporting directly art organizations. We also have a Cultural Corridor project connecting artists, community members and venues, and our Youth Arts Connection Library workshops in Pittsburgh, Antioch, and Brentwood. And we also facilitate exhibitions.

Moving forward, we're working on a Youth Arts Connection Strategic Plan, and it's to integrate art into diversion programs by partnering with artists, art organizations, and cultural leaders. And as we build and grow, we thank you for the hard decisions you're going to have to make today, and for your support in the work you do."

Stephanie Dignum, Development Manager at Living Jazz

"Hi everyone, thank you so much for your time. I'll be very brief. As Development Manager at Living Jazz, I support Scenario 2 because it ensures that more organizations can access funding at a time when arts nonprofits face shrinking public investment and limited reserves. Expanding the reach of support is the most effective way to keep the field strong. While individual awards may be smaller, Scenario 2 maximizes impact by sustaining more organizations across the state. Again, thank you for your thoughtful work and commitment to supporting the arts ecosystem. I appreciate all of you. Thank you."

Ann W. Smith, Board Member of Chanticleer

"Hi, everyone. I'm Ann W. Smith. I'm speaking today as a board member of Chanticleer in support of their application to the Arts and Youth Program. I welcome you here to the Bay Area, as always. During my first year in reviewing applications for the touring program in the early 80s, one group was, and still is, a total jaw-dropper: San Francisco Chanticleer. Then and as now, except during the COVID pandemic, their sound has thrilled, amazed, enlightened, soothed, and satisfied audiences in schools, colleges, communities, and concert halls, from home seasons in the Bay Area, California, the North American Hemisphere, and all over the world. Plus, we reach countless fans online with YouTube, Facebook, and TikTok. You just support the importance of Chanticleer in music education. Thank you, Anne."

Julie Baker, CEO of California for the Arts and California Arts Advocates

"Good morning, everyone. Julie Baker, CEO of California for the Arts and California Arts Advocates. I'm sorry to report that we are among several statewide service organizations that did not make the cut today to be put forward for funding. While this is largely due to the underinvestment in your agency and the oversubscription—over \$90 million in eligible applications and less than \$20 million in funds—there is an ongoing critical need for sustained funding for a sector that is reeling from a confluence of uncertainty and attacks on freedom of expression.

California for the Arts stands here committed today, and for all the days, to be a trusted partner to the agency and council to advance arts, culture, and creativity in California. While we were strongly against eliminating the SRN program and absorbing it into general operating, we need more data to understand if this will cause harm to the field we all serve.

Your support plays a truly critical role in helping strengthen the arts ecosystem across our entire state. While no longer a CAC program, the SRN Coalition continues to meet. We see ourselves as a valuable resource and collaborator. Our SRNs are ready to serve as vital connectors between the Council and the incredibly diverse communities throughout California.

While we will do our own research to gain an even more comprehensive understanding of this funding's impact, we ask the CAC to also collect and share data related to service organizations and other categories and the Council priorities that may impact who applies and is funded during this grant and future cycles. Finally, we would love the opportunity to share these findings, both from the CAC and the SRNs, in a joint presentation to the Council in the future. We see this as an excellent opportunity to demonstrate accountability, highlight the significant impact of arts service

organizations, and underscore the value of sustained support for the arts in California. Thank you."

Nathan Cottam, Artistic and Executive Director of Mannequin Theater and Dance

"Good morning, Council. Thank you so much for having me here. My name is Nathan Cottam. I'm Artistic and Executive Director of Mannequin Theater and Dance. My organization is in the funding on Scenario 3 for Arts and Youth, and in Scenario 2, for General Operating Support.

With not knowing until I arrive today how the scenarios are going to be playing out, I do appreciate the presentation. I would actually like to, raise my voice against the interest of my company, and against Scenario 2 and for Scenario 1. The reason I want to do that is because it is very difficult to grow an organization in the climate of the California arts milieu, as it were.

There is a great deal of what might seem like appropriate support for small organizations, but one of the consequences of that is that there's a penalty to growth, in a way. Looking at the amount that my organization will receive in Scenario 2, it's just not enough to support the growth of my organization. We would have served \$12,000 in Scenario 2. I need more than that, frankly, in order to grow, support salaries, support rent, to grow so that we can do more. I frankly would rather have received the arts and youth funding, which was \$18,500, to support the outreach ballet program that I unfortunately had to close this year because I could not fund it anymore.

I want to encourage Scenario 1, and hope that we encourage growth in larger organizations, rather than such a strong emphasis on small organizations. Thank you so much."

Rachel Osajima, Director of the Alameda County Arts Commission

"My name is Rachel Osajima. I'm the director of the Alameda County Arts Commission, and for those of you who don't know, Alameda County is on the east side of the San Francisco Bay Area. I'm here making comments on behalf of the Coalition of County Arts Agencies, which is comprised of all of the state-local partners.

We would like to thank the Allocations Committee, the council members, and staff for all of your thoughtful and dedicated hard work. Thank you for supporting the State-Local Partners Program, and we very much appreciate the second-year grant funding and your support for the SLP convening, which will take place in Sacramento in April 2026, in conjunction with CA Arts and Culture Summit and Arts Advocacy Day. So, thank you again, we appreciate all that you're doing."

Victor Payan, Founding Director of Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA)

"Hello, this is Victor Payan, Founding Director of Media Arts Santa Ana. We're a grassroots media arts organization currently celebrating our 10th anniversary this year. MASA is an important presenter of independent and international artists, including underrepresented communities such as students, females, BIPOC, API, Menasa, LGBT, and Orange County artists, and state funding has been critical to our success.

Regarding the funding allocations, I would like to recommend Scenario 2 first, and then Scenario 1 for this year's funding. General operating support is the most critical and rarest type of funding, alongside individual artist funding, which is also included in that section for this scenario. I'm glad to hear Scenario 3 is not being considered, as it has been noted that the largest number of applications in this funding cycle were for general operating support, and Scenario 3 leaves this vastly underserved. I hope the tremendous number of unfunded proposals serve to steer the conversation in the state regarding the dire need for more funding for the arts. The work of these organizations is more critical now than ever in promoting diversity and defending democracy, and cutting their funding across the board is part of the strategy to silence and disempower our communities. The arts sector is also a major revenue generator, employer, and provider of critical services that form a social safety net. Please support Scenario 2. It was heartbreaking to see how many important organizations were not funded this year, and I hope the state legislature is moved to restore and increase arts funding in light of this. Thank you."

John Henson, Arts Tours Director for the Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council

"Good morning, my name is John Henson. I'm the Arts Tours Director for the Morongo Basin Cultural Arts Council. I'm also a practicing artist working in the area for 12 years. I'm deeply committed to our rural region and have served on the board for 10 years.

As a lean non-profit, less than a \$150,000 budget, we operate the second largest open studio art tour event in California, representing the gateway communities of the Joshua Tree National Park. This will be our 24th year of presenting this event, and we have 225 artists participating this year. All of the art sales from this 3-week event go directly into the pockets of our local artists. I want to thank the Council for the years of support, which has helped our organization grow.

Today, I'm here to advocate that the Council consider funding allocations that serve the general operating support needs of our communities and across the state. With funding cuts across sectors, this vital support from the Arts Council will keep our organization running and able to pay our vital part-time staff. Scenario 2 is what the field needs. It is also the most equitable path. Scenario 2 is the most equitable, giving half to the field through fellowships and project support, and half to general operating needs. Scenario 1 forgets that the general operating needs of small organizations like ours can't run projects without this support. Thank you for your time. I know this is a challenging position to be in."

Akib Rahman, Policy Associate at Arts for LA (RS4LA)

"Good afternoon, Councilmembers. My name is Akib Rahman. I am the Policy Associate at RS4LA (Arts for LA), and I want to start by expressing my gratitude for your hard work. As an SRN and service organization, we remain ready to partner with you as connectors between the Council and diverse community we serve. We know the folding of SRN funds into general operating support has already impacted the number of eligible applicants, and will have ripple effects in our communities that are under-resourced.

While some networks receive support under Scenario 2, others do not, limiting our capacity to serve artists, arts workers, and organization. At the same time, we celebrate that many small and first-time grantees are benefiting under this scenario, and we support Scenario 2 for this broader impact it enables.

We are currently collecting data to compare this allocation with past SRN funding and to measure the ripple effects on communities. We urge the CAC to collect and share parallel data so we can combine findings for future picture of impact, which could be presented jointly to the Council in the future.

Finally, we encourage expanding community membership beyond two members for policy and allocation, and request greater clarity on how priority points are assigned and weighed in the review process. We also ask that the next strategic framework include a focus on service organizations.

Thank you so much for your leadership and for standing us within building a more equitable and resilient arts ecosystem."

Chris Maikish, Executive Director with Celebration Theater

"Good morning, I'm Chris Maikish, Executive Director with Celebration Theater, Southern California's longest-running LGBTQ plus theater, and the second oldest in the world. Like others, I can also appreciate the challenges at hand.

I want to speak today about the Impact Projects, which center historically marginalized communities, and disadvantaging this support to the degree that Scenario 2 does endangers project feasibility and dollars that go directly to such artists. In our case, where we have been edged out of general operating support, our only possibility for critical support is for our Trans Lineage Project. Our transgender and gender-diverse artists and community are, of course, under incredible stress and threat of violence right now. Scenario 2, in our case, would leave them out in the cold. And I can imagine that there are several other marginalized communities, many whose artists do not always

benefit directly from general operating funds, who'll experience the same. I ask you to consider Scenario 1 for this reason, and I thank the Council for your past support and your time today."

Alma Robinson, Executive Director of California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA)

"Good morning, council members. Thank you for your support, and staff as well. We do appreciate your detailed analysis of the scenarios that were presented. However, the Council has made a very short-sighted decision to eliminate the funding category for statewide and regional networks. We should not have to compete."

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

General Public Comment Summary

Jennifer Lane, Executive Director of the San Benito County Arts Council and Co-chair of the Coalition of County Arts Agencies (State-Local Partner)

"I want to underscore that we are stronger together and highlight the regional and local collaborations happening because of CAC grants. State-Local Partners (SLPs) are organizing Creative Economy Town Halls for community outreach and are securing California Jobs First grants (like a Tri-County effort to build an arts education workforce for Prop 28). Thank you for funding the SLP convening; we will use that energy to advocate for more funding for local assistance, given the difficult decisions you had to make today. Think of us as your partners for the strategic plan and the 50th anniversary; we strengthen the trunk like intertwined branches of a tree."

Dominique Johnson, Stanislaus Arts Council (State-Local Partner)

"I extend our sincere gratitude for your overall support for the state-local partnership. Without your support, I would not have a job, and my county would not have visibility in the arts. You are actively putting people to work within our communities. As an artist and mother of artists, I greatly appreciate everything you're doing. The support for the upcoming SLP convening is so appreciated; it opens doors for rural arts councils like mine that can't often afford to travel. I'm greatly inspired by you all, and I hope to attend more meetings."

Sean Fenton, Executive Director of Theatre Bay Area, Board Member of Californians for the Arts, and President of California Arts Advocates

"Thank you for your service and support, even with programs severely oversubscribed. Theatre Bay Area, which serves over 200 organizations and thousands of artists across nine counties, is proud to continue its work, including re-granting to small companies. As a former long-time SRN grantee, Theatre Bay Area has not been advanced for operating support this year, and we've had to reduce our staff from six to five full-time employees. This is why we support the request to publish data on this year's process and explicitly include arts service organizations in your next strategic framework. I also urge the Council to consider designating more than 10 new cultural districts this cycle to increase the program's value to legislators and unlock more opportunities for affordable housing for artists."

Natalia Nedera, Cultural Worker of mixed heritage (based in Oakland, CA)

"I am here today with a different hat to thank the Council as a first-time recipient of the Folk and Traditional Arts program (administered by ACTA). This grant makes it possible to uplift Indigenous knowledge by resourcing Mapuche culture bearers and creating spaces for traditions to be passed down. Specifically, we have a rare opportunity to learn Mapuche weaving (withral) from two-spirit Mapuche weavers based in San Diego. When well-resourced, culture bearers provide solutions to urgent societal challenges by building lasting networks of mutual aid and helping us resist cultural

erasure. Please keep supporting culture bearers as you consider the cultural districts program."

Alexander Finn, Founder and Executive Director of In My Section

"I am a poet, teacher, husband, and father, and head coach of the Pittsburgh Prodigies, one of the most successful youth poetry teams in the country, based in Pittsburgh, California. Our organization, In My Section, serves a low-income community where 95% of youth are Black, Brown, or Indigenous. I'm urging this Council to support emerging organizations because gentrification has displaced historically marginalized families, shifting the energy of young artists eastward. Our youth often travel hours to perform because Oakland and SF organizations no longer accommodate where Black, Brown, and low-income families actually live. We need an arts infrastructure for us, by us, in cities like Pittsburgh, Antioch, Fairfield, and Stockton, where the greatest needs—and brightest youth artists—are found."

TAB T

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025

DATE: October 24, 2025
TO: Council Members
FROM: Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager
RE: FY2025/26 Applicant and Grantee Data Presentation

Background: At the Council Meeting held on September 26, 2025, Council requested specific data points to be reported on FY2025/26 applicants and grantee cohort, as well as additional data points about past CAC grants to assist with program policy decision-making. Since the meeting, the Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager, with support from the Programs team, has been reviewing requests, determining the feasibility and defining a timeline for addressing requests, and preparing data.

Council Presentation:

In response to requests, staff prepared a presentation of the data available and ready to be analyzed for Council review and discussion. These include:

General FY2025/26 Applicant and Grantee Overview

- Breakdown of applications, including eligibility, priority characteristics (percentages and numbers)
- Details of total operating revenue by program
- Geographic distribution of applicants and grantees (county and per capita)
- Discipline and types of organizations (where available)
- Select comparisons to FY2024 where available (number of applicants vs. grantees, numbers, geography, revenue, etc.)

Information on Prior Statewide and Regional Network Grantees (SRN)

- Number of SRN applicants, eligibility and grantee cohorts in comparison to FY2025 applicant/grantee pool (FY2022 to 2025)
- Average grant amounts – (FY2022 to 2025)

- Review of types of SRN organizations (budget size, discipline, geography, other)

Note that a full examination of the impact of consolidation on SRNs will be conducted in early 2026 and will include direct outreach and discussion with those impacted.

Information on Prior Individual Program Arts and Youth Grantees (AAY)

- Number of AAY applicants, eligibility and grantee cohorts in comparison to FY2025 applicant/grantee pool (FY2022 to 2025)
- Average grant amounts (FY2022 to 2025)

Some of the requests that Council made will require more time to complete. These include requests for a review of CAC programs and grants for the past five years, including a number of first-time grantees since 2017 and a deeper investigation of repeat general operating support grantees since 2017. This analysis and reporting will be made available in January 2026. Primary research on the impacts of program policy decisions for Fiscal Year 2025 will take place in the first quarter of 2026.

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Preliminary Overview

October 24, 2025

REBECCA RATZKIN | Equity Measures and Evaluation manager



AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. General overview and comparison
2. Program policy priorities
3. Consolidation comparison for individual programs
4. Next steps

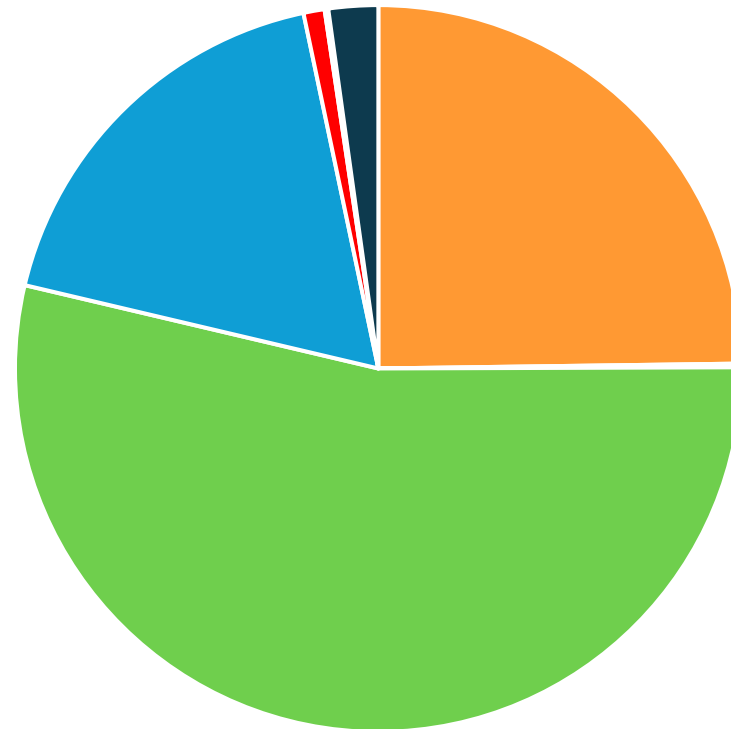
FY2025/26 OVERVIEW



The majority of applications (54%) are general operating support.

	PROGRAM	NUMBER	PERCENT
	Arts and Youth	607	24.8%
	Folk and Traditional Arts	4	0.2%
	General Operating Support	1316	53.7%
	Impact Projects	441	18.0%
	Individual Artist Fellowships-AO	23	0.9%
	State Local Partner Mentorship	4	0.2%
	State-Local Partnership	54	2.2%
	Total	2449	100%

**Note the table includes 2nd year SLP grantees.*



Success rates have varied over the years likely due to change in programs, maximum award amounts and allocations.

	ALL YEARS	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021/ 21A	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total applications	20,080	1,134	1,817	2,120	745	5,604	2,123	1,898	2,025	2,613
Ineligible	1,171	19	28	177	90	283	117	64	176	217
Successful	9,194	842	1,387	1,506	288	1,635	1,611	871	427	626
Success rate	49%	76%	78%	78%	44%	31%	80%	47%	23%	26%
Total Allocations	\$296M	\$16.4M	\$24.5M	\$23.1M	\$18.5M	\$28.5M	\$141.4M	\$24.2M	\$19.5M	\$19.5M

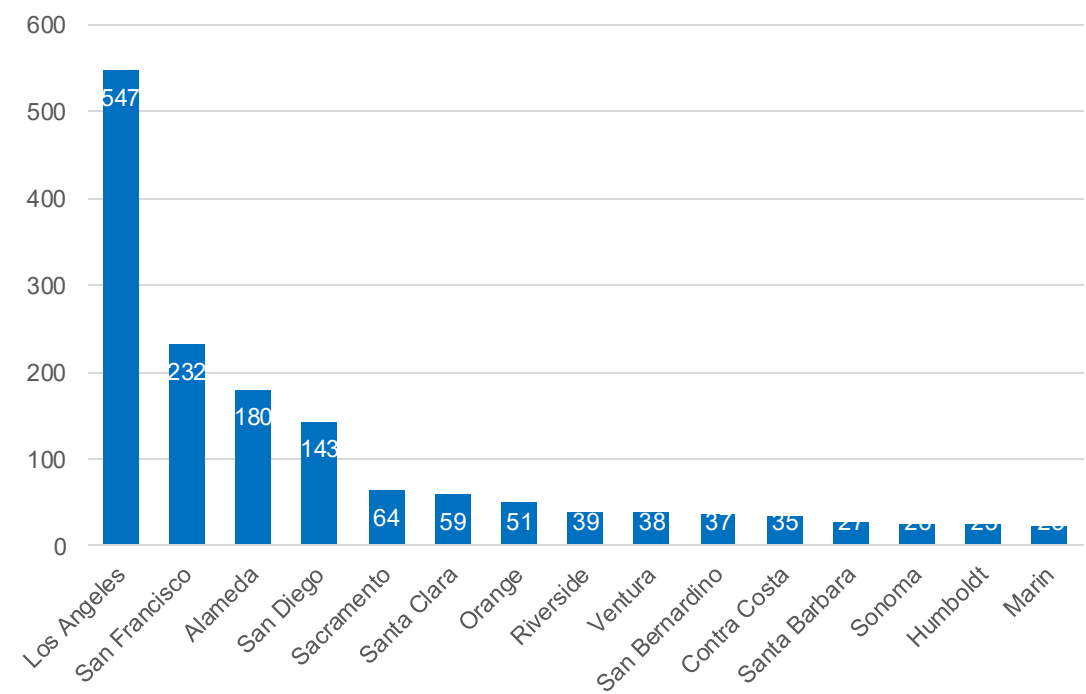
**2022 allocations include Creative Youth Fund, California Creative Corps and Cultural Districts)*

**2024 Successful grantee #'s don't include 376 second year general operating and Folk and Traditional Arts grantees*

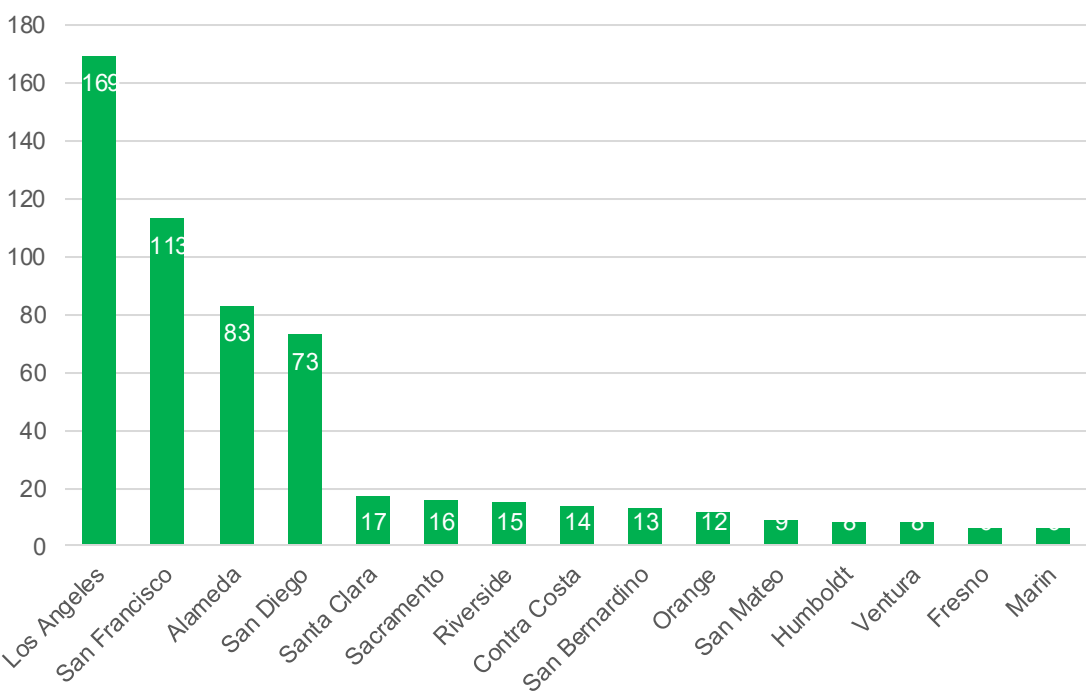
**2025 Successful grantee #'s don't include 53 second year State-Local Partners*

Majority of applicants are in larger urban counties.

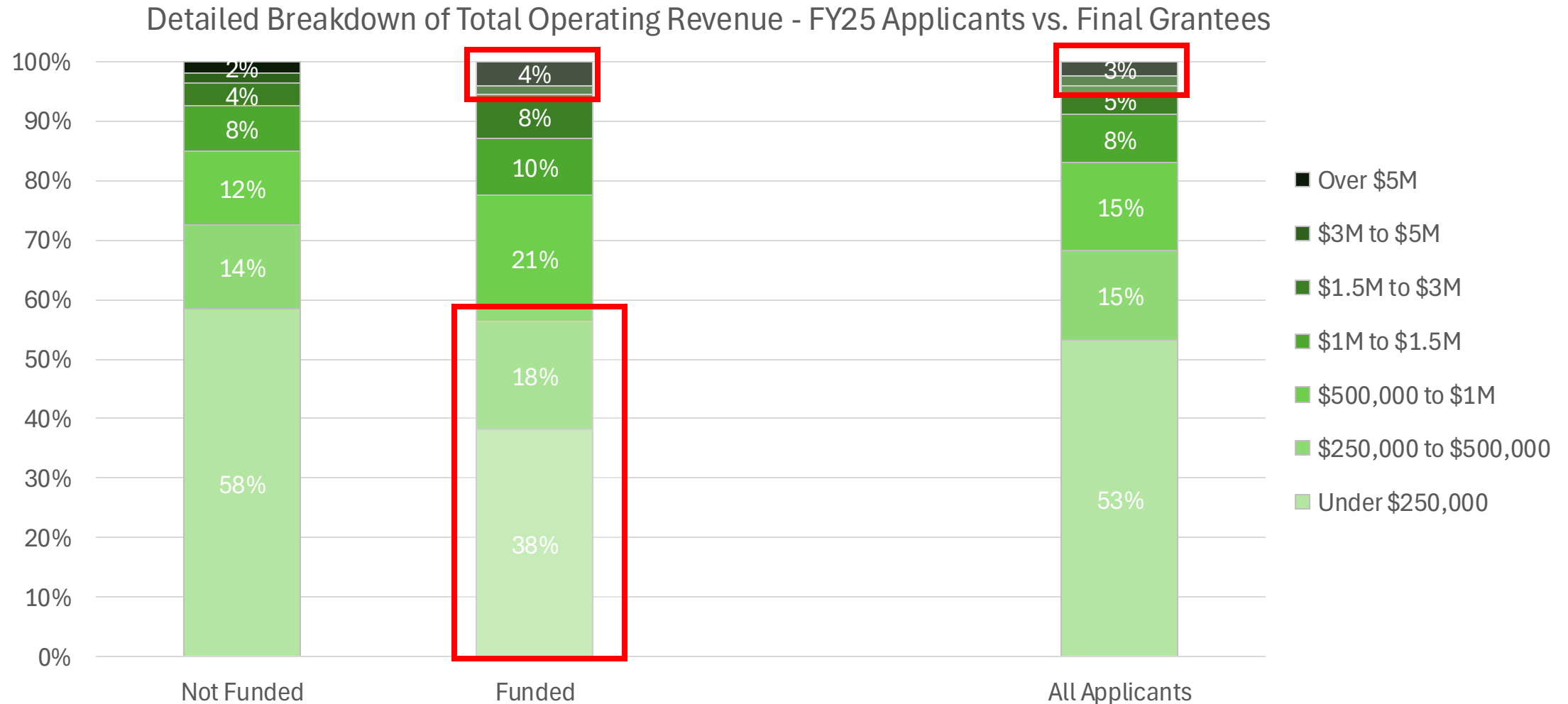
Number of Applicant Organizations by County - Top 15 Counties



Number of FY25 Grantees by County - Top 15 Counties



5% (34) of FY25/26 grantees have total operating revenues of \$3M or more, proportionate to the total applicant pool

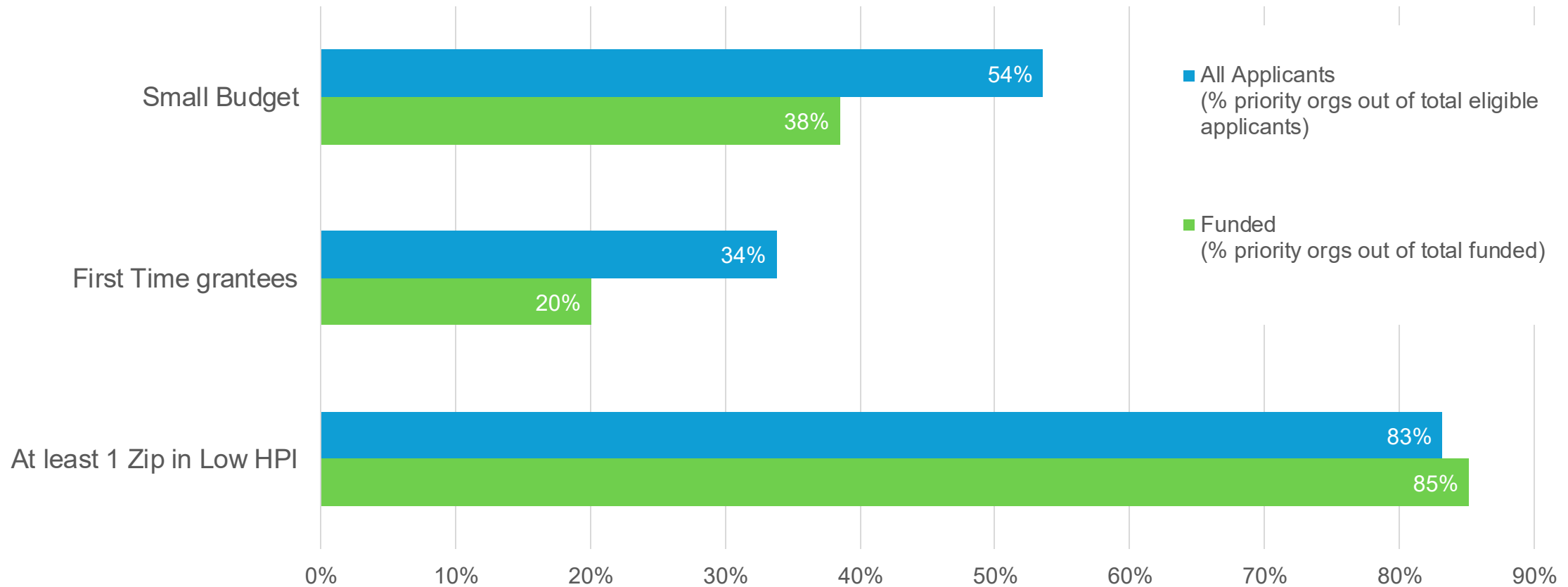


PRIORITY OVERVIEW



Small budget and first-time grantee organizations make up a smaller proportion of the grantee cohort vs. the applicant cohort.

Proportion of Priorities in FY25 - Applicants vs. Grantees



87% of General Operating, Arts and Youth and Impact Project grantees meet at least one priority criteria.

COUNT OF PRIORITIES	ALL APPLICANTS	FUNDED	NOT FUNDED
No priorities	329	78	251
1 Priority	814	298	516
2 Priorities	767	182	585
All 3 Priorities	454	55	399
TOTAL	2364	613	1751

CONSOLIDATION FROM PRIOR INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS



The average FY25 General Operating grant awarded to SRN organizations is ~45% of FY24 SRN grant awards.

**Statewide Regional Network Organization
Comparison – 2025 vs. 2024**

	FY25 GENOPS SRNs Funded	FY 24 SRN
Average grant amount	\$ 15,650	\$ 34,600
Number of grants	18	62
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 22,200	\$ 46,293

Five former Cultural Pathways grantees received a FY25 General Operating grant, out of a total of 37 applicants.

**Cultural Pathways Organization Comparison –
2025 vs. 2022**

	FY25 GENOPS CPs Funded	FY 22 Cultural Pathways
Average grant amount	\$ 15,300	\$ 26,087
Number of grants	5	78
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 21,000	\$ 30,000

Approximately half of former individual arts and youth program grantees received a FY25 Arts and Youth grant.

FY2025 Arts and Youth Funded Grants

	Number of Grants	Average Grant Amount	Maximum Grant Award	FY24 Grant numbers	FY24 Average Grant \$	FY24 Maximum Grant \$
Arts Education – Exposure	15	\$ 19,400	\$ 22,750	47	\$ 17,237	\$ 23,147
Arts Integration Training	4	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,500	16	\$ 18,917	\$ 23,147
Creative Youth Development	37	\$ 18,981	\$ 23,000	115	\$ 16,774	\$ 23,147

NEXT STEPS



Additional immediate evaluation activities will include:

- Council data requests, including
 - Impact of program consolidation on SRNs
 - Impact of General Operating and multi-year grants on organizational capacity
- Qualitative thematic review of FY23/24 reports
- Mapping analysis of grantees and communities served



QUESTIONS



THANK YOU

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TAB U

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025

TO: All Council Members

FROM: Programs Policy Committee (Gerald Clarke and Caleb Duarte)

RE: Voting Item: Recommendation of Programs to Open in 2026

The Programs Policy Committee recommends that Council vote to open the following grant programs in 2026:

- State-Local Partners
- State-Local Partner Mentorship
- General Operating Support
- Impact Projects
- Arts and Youth

Purpose: To provide Council with the Committee's recommendation of programs to open in 2026.

Background: At the September 26, 2025, meeting, CAC Director of Programs facilitated a discussion with Council regarding data needed to inform programs policy decisions for 2026. As a result, data was presented by CAC Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager in this meeting prior to the discussion and vote on programs to open in 2026. Since the September Council meeting, the Committee met on October 7th, 9th, and 21st. In deliberating on programs to open, the Committee considered data about 2025 applications; feedback from the field and public comment; the context of the last five years of CAC grant programming; and the imperative to keep program offerings consistent to evaluate and understand their impact.

Considerations for Council:

Funding priorities:

- The Committee examined how applicants ranked that met priorities but were not funded. Note, priorities originated in the [Strategic Framework](#) (1st time grantees, small organizations¹, and those serving lower Healthy Places Index (HPI) quartiles). A majority of priority applications across General Operating Support, Impact Projects, and Arts and Youth Programs ranked four (good per the [RankingGuide.pdf](#)) or higher out of a possible six points, totaling approximately \$58 million in requests - while the total FY25/26 appropriation for all programs was \$19,533,000 - demonstrating that demand from qualified, priority applicants exceeded funding available by nearly 300%.
- The Committee considered the benefit of remaining consistent with funding priorities to allow CAC to effectively evaluate the impact of its policy decisions on the health of grantees and the field at large. Key indicators including first-time applicant and grantee status, and lists of zip codes served, were collected systematically for the first time during the 2025/26 grant cycle. Comparison of these metrics will not be possible until data is collected consistently over at least two to three years to identify longitudinal trends.

Program Consolidation:

- The Committee viewed how grantees of consolidated programs (General Operating Support and Arts and Youth) compared to grantee numbers pre-consolidation of the individual programs. The Committee recognizes that a more complete evaluation of the impact of consolidation on prior grantees is necessary, which requires consistent data across multiple years. Council could consider reinstating individual programs if the CAC Local Assistance budget increases, but given state budget projections, the Committee does not recommend it at this time.

¹ Council has been considering organizations with Total Revenues up to \$250,000 to be small organizations. See our Field Scan for data on sizes of arts and culture nonprofits in the state: https://arts.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Field-Scan-Report_2022-1130.pdf.

Prioritizing General Operating Support and Project-Based Programs:

- Based on the Committee's knowledge of the field and feedback in public comments to Council, the Committee reaffirms the importance of offering and funding both General Operating Support and project-based programs, which aligns with the Strategic Framework aspirations to reach and support different individual artists and populations. This is an area where Council could request more data analysis going forward.

Cultural Districts:

- The Committee also recommends discussing re-opening the Cultural Districts program, provided agency capacity to implement this program exists as well as funding.
- The program has momentum now, with 10 new district designations to be voted on at the December Council meeting.

Changing Programming and the Need for Evaluation:

- The current Strategic Framework calls for comprehensive evaluation of programs and improved annual data reporting on the status of programs in relation to agency policy, priorities, and mission (<https://view.publitas.com/ca-arts-council/california-arts-council-strategic-framework/page/10-11>). The agency cannot accomplish this goal with frequent program changes from year to year.
- Over the course of the past two years, the Council and agency have worked to implement Strategic Framework aspirations to consolidate and focus offerings to provide greater stability and lessen the burden for applicants as well as improve longitudinal data gathering and evaluation. A stable roster of programs for FY26/27 with minimal changes will support the Council's understanding of the impact of program policy decisions on individual organizations and the field at large, providing an opportunity for the agency to better understand and meet technical assistance needs for applicants.

Recommendation: Given all these considerations, the Committee recommends re-opening the same programs opened in 2025, except for: Individual Artist Fellowship and Folk and Traditional Arts, which were opened as two-year programs in 2025 and will already have cohorts in place; and Cultural Districts, pending Council discussion.

Report Prepared by Committee Staff: Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services, and Elisa Gollub, Programs Manager, in collaboration with the Programs Policy Committee.



CALIFORNIA
ARTS COUNCIL
A STATE AGENCY

“Asking questions, cultivating transparency and being honest is key in the decision-making process.”
– adrienne maree brown

California Arts Council
Decision Support Tool

What is the Decision Support Tool?

The Decision Support Tool encourages us to make decisions that are grounded in our Racial Equity Action Plan. The purpose of the tool is to invite us all with different functions and roles to think and talk through a variety of possible impacts resulting from any decision-making action.

This tool is meant to be used after your initial brainstorming phase to test the action’s alignment within our [Strategic Framework](#) and [Root Cause Rationale](#). Sections can be completed by staff or council, as needed, to complete this exercise.

***Please note that a response is needed in each section of this worksheet**, if the answer is no or you cannot provide an answer, please STOP and reach out to a supervisor or appropriate council member for additional guidance before completing additional questions.

Who is completing this DST?

What is the decision that needs to be made? (1-3 sentences)	
Why is this decision important and what situation or process is informing it? (1-3 sentences)	
When does this decision need to be made? What is the proposed timeline? Is there flexibility on the timeline?	
Where and how does this action live within the agency’s Strategic Framework, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better identifies and meets local needs• Reduces barriers to accessing CAC funds, programs and meetings• Amplifies leadership engagement with constituents• Focuses on public input• Evaluates funding programs and grantmaking processes	
Do we have the staffing capacity to support this decision and action? If yes, please list who will be accountable for each stage of implementation. If no, please stop here.	
Do we have funding for this decision and action? If yes, please state briefly the source of funding. If no, please stop here.	
Who needs to make the final decision? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Management• Council• Other (Please explain and provide a brief outline of the process.)	
Who is expected to benefit from this decision and action, and what methods have been used to research and/or gather community input?	
What might be unintended consequences, drawbacks, opportunities or domino effects from this decision and action?	
Will this action hinder or help: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Organizations?• Certain regions of the state?• Communities with disabilities?• People who communicate in languages other than English?• Communities who face social stigma, trauma and/or safety concerns?• Communities with fewer technological resources and/or expertise?• Communities who have been historically marginalized or oppressed? Note that the decision should help at least one of the above . If yes to any hindrance, what adjustments could be made to offset the disadvantage?	

Has a survey of research or best practices been conducted to support this action in a Racial Equity context? For example, this could include research from other institutions or sectors that are related, or a list of relevant articles or policies from similar agencies or organizations. If yes, briefly state this research here in a few sentences. If no, please stop here.	
What is the potential impact on staff at different levels of the organization?	
What is the potential impact on the field?	
Does this action address the following in the long-term? Your response should include at least one of the below options, please briefly elaborate on your answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addresses root causes of inequity• Instills faith in government transparency, accountability and stewardship• Positions CAC as a leader in the field	
Please outline next steps to support the decision-making that is needed to move forward from now.	
How will the decision and progress on the action be tracked and communicated to various audiences both internally and externally?	
How will we know if the expected goal or benefit is achieved?	
What is the support mechanism if progress is stalled or if unexpected consequences, criticism or backlash develops?	

- Thank you for completing this DST!
 - At your next Council Committee Meeting, please discuss next steps for introduction to the wider Council, further plan development and implementation.
 - You can make updates to this form in future if requested by key players and decision-makers. Please save a copy of your responses to refer back to.

PROGRAMS TO OPEN

FY26-27

Gerald Clarke and Caleb Duarte – Programs Policy Committee
Gerald.Clarke@arts.ca.gov and Caleb.Duarte@arts.ca.gov



AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. Recommendation of Programs to Open
2. Considerations for Council
3. DST Highlights

RECOMMENDATION

- State-Local Partners
- State-Local Partner Mentorship
- General Operating Support
- Impact Projects
- Arts and Youth

Folk & Traditional Arts and Individual Artist Fellowship will be continuing their second program year



DATA CONSULTED & DETERMINATION MADE

Data Consulted

- 2025 applications, including priority and geographical data
- 3–5-year grant history
- Feedback from the field and Council
- Data from Strategic Framework and Field Scan

Determination Made

- Fuller programmatic evaluation
- To be consistent with 2025 available programming
- To discuss Cultural Districts timing

CONSIDERATIONS

1

Keeping priorities consistent

- Priority applications exceeded available funding resources

2

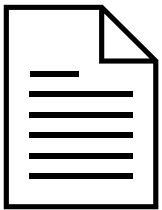
Committee would like to evaluate priority data and effects of program consolidation more fully over next two years

3

With current budget, breaking out individual programs from broader umbrellas is not recommended

SELECT DST POINTS

WHERE AND HOW DOES THIS ACTION LIVE WITHIN THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK?



- Supports the Strategic Framework aspiration to evaluate funding programs and grantmaking processes
- Consistency in offerings facilitates consistent data collection & analysis

SELECT DST POINTS

WHAT MIGHT BE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES?

Grantees of programs not opening may have lower chances to be funded or face steeper competition for funding with dissimilar organizations or projects

SELECT DST POINTS

WHO WILL BE HINDERED OR HELPED?

Small organizations and communities who have been historically marginalized or oppressed (if priorities also remain consistent within program guidelines frameworks)

NEXT STEPS

Guidelines Frameworks: Discussion (December) and Vote (January)

- Priorities
- Grant Terms
- Total Revenue Caps
- Maximum Request Amounts



QUESTIONS



THANK YOU

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TAB V

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025

TO: All Council Members

FROM: Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee

RE: 50th Anniversary Logo & Design Treatment

RECOMMENDATION – Approve the 50th Anniversary Logo & Design Treatment.

Background:

In accordance with the agency's bylaws, the Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary committee was established to develop a strategy and plan for the 50th Anniversary of the CAC in 2026.

At the June 20, 2025, Council meeting, the council approved the plan, budget, and timeline for the Awards Ceremony. At the September 26 Council meeting, the Council voted to approve the Award Selection Criteria and Process.

The Council also reviewed and discussed three branding designs for 50th Anniversary. After receiving robust feedback from the Council, two are presented here for your consideration.

This report was prepared by staff in collaboration with the committee.

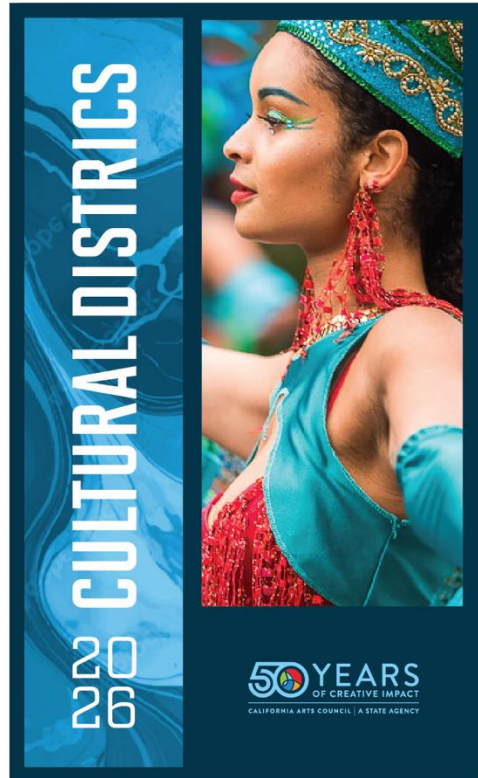
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

50th Anniversary Logo and Branding

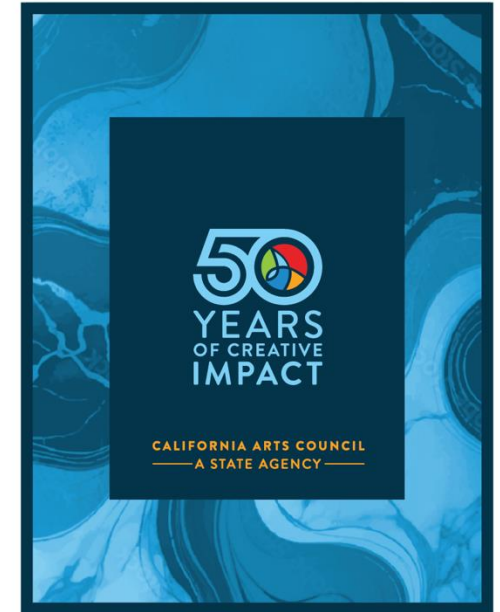
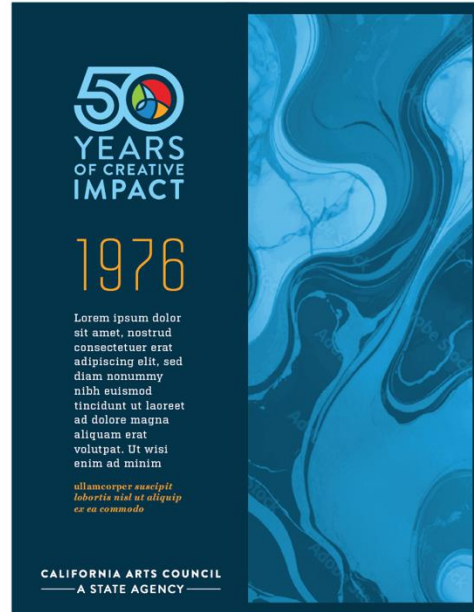
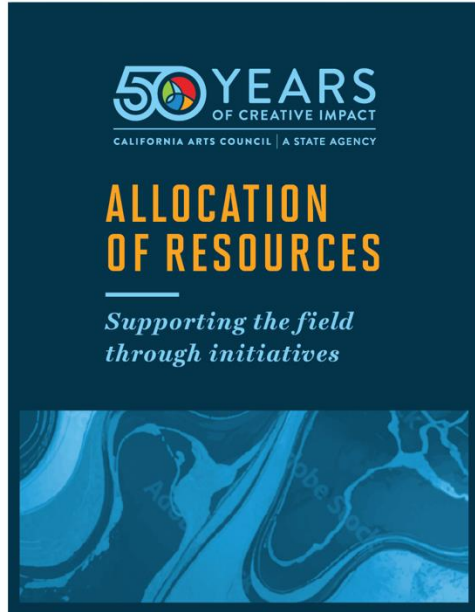
50TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO AND BRANDING



50TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO AND BRANDING



50TH ANNIVERSARY LOGO AND BRANDING



SUB-BRAND - AWARDS CEREMONY



BRAND EXTENSION



WEBSITE



TAB W

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025

TO: All Council Members

FROM: Strategic Framework Committee – Roy Hirabayashi and Dorka Keehn

RE: Strategic Framework Committee Update

Executive Summary:

- The Strategic Framework Committee has reviewed progress toward the 2020–2027 Strategic Framework and is initiating the next planning cycle to create a seven-year plan for 2028-2034.
- 29% of aspirations have been completed, 46% are in progress, and 25% have not started.
- Council input is sought on priorities, areas to adjust or add, and the scope of the upcoming Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a strategic planning consultant.
- A planning process is scheduled for 2026 to ensure a new framework is in place by 2028.

Per the Council bylaws, the Council must establish, maintain, and regularly update a strategic plan with clear goals, objectives, timelines, and implementation benchmarks. According to the Chair's Committee Charter, the Strategic Framework Committee maintains the Council's active role in strategic planning by reviewing the current framework, reporting on progress, setting priorities for the next planning cycle, considering public input strategies, and making recommendations to the Council.

A strategic framework articulates the mission, vision, and values of the agency and provides a roadmap for achieving goals. California state agencies are required to have strategic plans, and the National Endowment for the Arts similarly requires state arts agency partners to share current strategic plans. Within the 2020-2027 Strategic Framework, the Committee's charge is to "shepherd the implementation and periodic assessment and modification of this framework on behalf of the Council."

Background and Activities: Since June 2025, the Committee has been reviewing the current Strategic Framework Plan progress, which expires in 2027, and considering a scope of work and timeline for an RFP to hire a strategic planning consultant. This work serves as the foundation for a planning process to begin in 2026 that would ensure an updated plan will be in place by 2028. The Committee has met on June 29, August 5, August 19, October 7, and October 21.

The following section briefly summarizes how the current framework was developed and what it was set to achieve.

Strategic Framework Overview

- Interviews with CAC staff and Council
- Interviews and written discussion with CA legislators and the present Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House Assembly
- Key informant phone interviews representing diverse interests, communities, and sectors
- Four in-person focus groups in Marin City, Weed, Fresno, and Twentynine Palms
- Two statewide telephone think tanks
- Online and mail-in survey
- Optional video submissions of desires and visions for CAC
- National scan of arts councils and commissions
- Staff and Council work sessions
- Brand identity and messaging

The plan defines six expected outcomes, as follows:

1. Implement Decision Support Tool
2. Better identify and meet local needs
3. Reduce barriers to accessing CAC funds, programs, and meetings
4. Amplify leadership engagement with constituents
5. Form numerous advisory groups
6. Comprehensively evaluate all funding programs and grantmaking processes

These outcomes are to be achieved through 28 aspirational actions in the categories of grantmaking, programs, policy, partnerships and public communications, and range from adjusting Council meeting schedules, to setting programming policy priorities, supporting State-Local Partners and establishing state agency partnerships (<https://view.publitas.com/ca-arts-council/california-arts-council-strategic-framework/page/46-47>).

Since 2020, the agency has accomplished a great deal, weathered organizational changes and COVID impacts, and planted seeds for many of the aspirations.

Current Strategic Framework High-Level Progress Update: CAC staff reviewed agency activities and policies enacted or in planning since the inception of the plan in comparison to the aspirations. This preliminary review process revealed that out of the 28 aspirations:

- 8 are complete (29%);
- 13 are in progress to varying degrees (46%); and
- 7 have not yet started (25%).

The following tables describe the status assessment of all aspirations.

Table 1: COMPLETED Strategic Framework Aspirations

ASPIRATIONS	ACTIVITIES
Establish Council timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline/meeting schedule set in consideration of grant cycle • Data has been introduced at key decision-making moments • Structure of discussion and subsequent voting process improvements
Accessible Council meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASL and Spanish language offered at all meetings
Increase support for State-Local Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased potential maximum amount to \$75,000 • Expanded State-Local Partner (SLP) program from one to two-year cycle • Mentorship program moving towards SLP for all 58 counties • FY25/26 welcomes all CA counties
Consolidate programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2018, project-based programs consolidated into Impact Projects • In 25/26 grants consolidated programs into General Operating and Arts and Youth
Fund individual artist pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual artist fellowship program launched first as direct and now as Administering Organization (AO)-model program • Individual artists also supported directly through FTA and Creative Corps
Prioritize general operating and multi-year grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023/24 cycle included two-year general operating grants • 2024/25 cycle includes general operating support • Various programs are multi-year (SLP, IAF, FTA)
Prioritize small organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of CAC's grantees are small organizations (total operating revenue) • 2025/26 cycle prioritizes small organizations

ASPIRATIONS	ACTIVITIES
Review and revise match requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match requirement adjusted to exempt small budget (under \$250k TOR) organizations

Table 2: IN PROGRESS Strategic Framework Aspirations

ASPIRATION	ACTIVITIES
Participate in and host convenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started attending national and local convenings in 2024, and 2025 Convened SLPs in 2024 focused on racial equity Creative Corps cohort informally convened Cultural Districts will be convened on a quarterly basis
Center arts as a key, cross-sectoral component in solving social and environmental issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Corps funded over 600 projects statewide at the intersection of arts and other sectors (health, civic life, climate) Creative Economy Strategic Plan includes recommendations for integrating arts into government CAC is partnering with Stanford on Cultural Policy Fellows CAC received funds for NEA pilot on arts and health
Grow workforce and private partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative Economy Strategic Plan to be published fall 2025. Partnerships still TBD.
Determine and mitigate grantee reporting burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager hired Adjustments to final and interim reports piloted in 2023 and 2024 cycles Discussions began with DataArts SLP requirement for data collection plan aligned with FY23/24 guidelines in coordination with CAC staff
Establish an arts learning community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AO's provided intense capacity building as part of scopes (e.g., Creative Corps) Cultural Districts will convene and serve as mentors to newly designated districts SLP-Mentorship program
Create partnerships with Native American communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with consultant to engage CA Native American communities for designing new grant program
Provide capacity building for State-Local Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support 2024 peer learning convening
Expand online opportunities hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online job/opportunity hub within website is being assessed with new website developer
Consider state agency funder role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional funding is distributed through variety of funding – SLPs, IAF, FTA, cultural districts and Creative Corps

ASPIRATION	ACTIVITIES
Provide ongoing grantee support and technical assistance (TA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff regularly field grantee and interested applicant requests and questions on an ongoing basis 25/26 grant cycle included robust in person outreach, engagement and technical assistance, including 13 in-person technical assistance and outreach sessions in low HPI communities and numerous virtual TA sessions.
Lead or join funder collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff attended and led presentations at convenings in 2024 (e.g., NASAA, Grantmakers for the Arts) Executive Director has attended other funder convenings (e.g., Southern CA Grantmakers)
Explore possibility for multiple application formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment revealed lack of capacity to accommodate applications outside of GMS Other formats, such as video, not assessed or considered Highly unlikely to happen outside of a technology solution
Explore ways to achieve geographic equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match requirement adjusted to exempt small budget (under \$250k TOR) organizations 25/26 grant cycle included request for applicants to submit zip codes served to align with Health Places Index quartile goals Further investigation and comparison to other funders yet to be started

Table 3: NOT STARTED Strategic Framework Aspirations

NOT STARTED
Research other state funding models
Establish State Government Roundtable
Launch public awareness campaign about CAC
Provide educational resources to inform elected officials and others of the benefits of the arts
Be a state partner in movement to increase low-cost housing for artists
Generate awareness campaign about arts and culture in general
Establish standing work groups to advise staff

The review and strategic planning discussions have included deep reflections of the degree of progress and opportunity the current plan may still have. The Committee will facilitate a brief discussion around the following questions after a presentation on Strategic Framework

progress. Staff will make recommendations on next steps around aspirations in progress and not yet started.

Council Discussion Questions:

1. Does Council have feedback about the progress of the framework as described?
2. Given the environmental changes over the last five years, are there areas that could be removed or postponed?
3. Are there areas that deserve renewed focus?
4. Are there areas missing that should be added?
5. How deeply does Council envision changing the framework in its next iteration?
6. Who should be engaged in the planning process?
7. Are there actions the Committee should take that are not outlined in this memo?

Next Steps and Timeline

- Staff to:
 - Establish an internal workgroup to address remaining current strategic framework aspirations – November 2025
 - Conduct a more thorough assessment of the plan progress – January to February 2026
 - Determine recommendations for updating the current framework – February to March 2026
 - Present to Committee – April 2026
- Committee to:
 - Provide high level guidance, supplying feedback and insight into the development of the scope of work and RFP. Adjusted potential timeline for launch of RFP:
- April – May 2026: RFP development and launch
- July 2026 – anticipated contract start date

Report Prepared by Committee Staff: Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager, with Elisa Gollub, Programs Manager, and Megan Morgan, Race and Equity Manager.

2020-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

California Arts Council Strategic Framework
Committee

Dorka Keehn and Roy Hirabayashi, CAC Council Members
Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager, CAC



AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. 2020 – 2027 Strategic Framework Progress review
2. Council Discussion
3. Next Steps

2018-2027 OUTCOMES



IMPLEMENT DECISION SUPPORT TOOL



AMPLIFY LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT
WITH CONSTITUENTS



BETTER IDENTIFY AND MEETING LOCAL
NEEDS.



FORM NUMEROUS ADVISORY GROUPS
THAT FOCUS ON PUBLIC INPUT



REDUCE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING CAC
FUNDS, PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

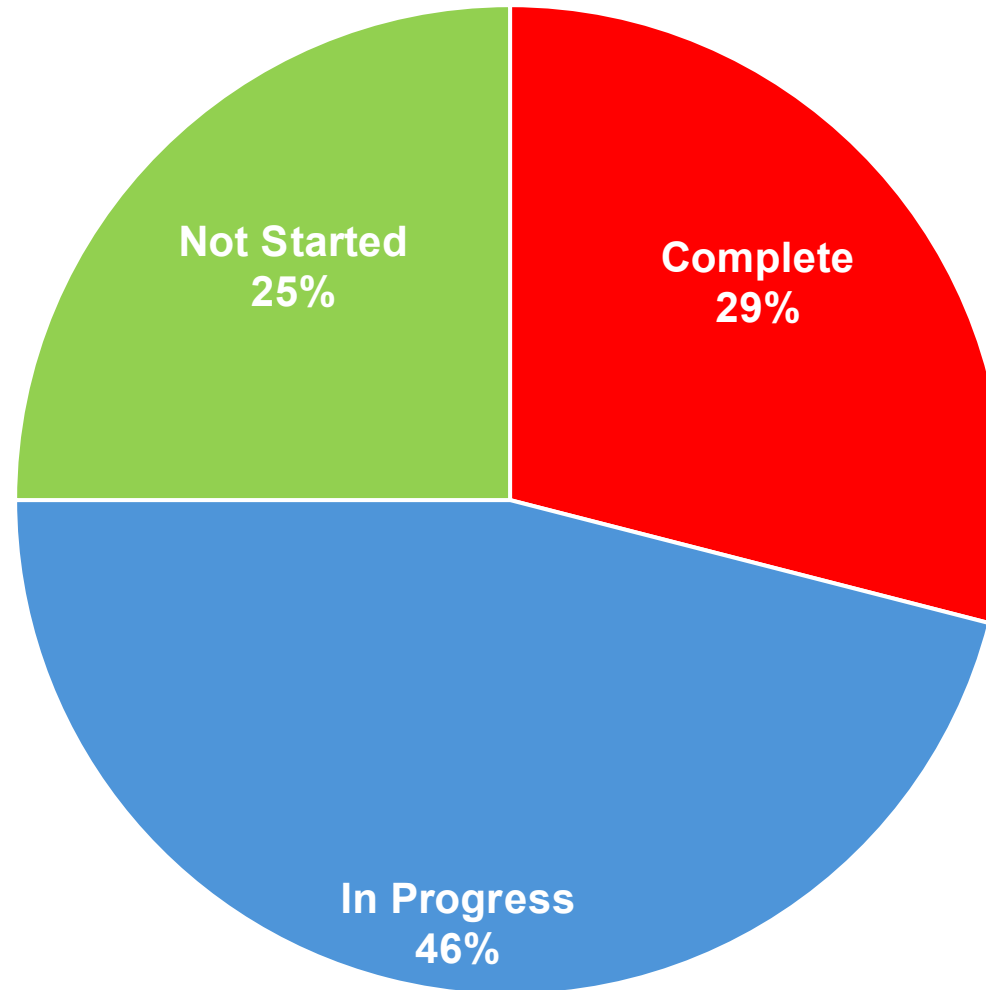


COMPREHENSIVELY EVALUATE ALL
FUNDING PROGRAMS AND
GRANTMAKING PROCESSES

2020 – 2027 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PROGRESS REVIEW



PERCENTAGE PROGRESS OF 28 ASPIRATIONS



COMPLETED

Council timeline

**Accessible
Council meetings**

**Support for
State-Local
Partnerships**

**Consolidate
programs**

**Individual artist
pilot**

**Prioritize general
operating and
multi-year grants**

**Prioritize small
organizations**

**Review and
revise match
requirements**

IN PROGRESS

Convenings

Social and
environmental
issues

Workforce and
private
partnerships

Grantee
reporting
burden

Arts learning
community

Native
American
communities

Capacity
building for
State-Local
Partnerships

Online
opportunities
hub

State agency
funder role

Ongoing
support and
technical
assistance

Funder
collaborative

Multiple
application
formats

Geographic
equity

NOT STARTED

Research other
state funding
models

State
Government
Roundtable

Public
awareness
campaign about
CAC

Educational
resources on the
benefits of the
arts

Partner to
increase low-
cost housing for
artists

Awareness
campaign about
arts and culture

Standing
advisory work
groups

COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND TIMELINE



Does Council have feedback about the progress of the framework as described?

- Given the environmental changes over the last five years, are there areas that could be removed or postponed?
- Are there areas that deserve renewed focus?
- Are there areas missing that should be added?
- Are there actions the Committee should take that are not outlined in the memo?

Anticipated Timeline

November	Staff establish an internal workgroup
January – February 2026	Staff conduct a more thorough assessment
February – March 2026	Recommendations for updating plan
April 2026	Committee presentation
April – May 2026	RFP development and launch
July 2026	Anticipated contractor start date

THANK YOU

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TAB X

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025

TO: All Council Members

FROM: Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee

Phil Mercado and Rick Stein

RE: Award Ceremony Fundraising Update

Background

The Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee was established in June 2025 to develop a fund development strategy for the agency to support the 50th Anniversary Award Ceremony. Upon approval of the strategy and plan by Council on September 26, 2025, the Chair revised the committee goal to support the implementation of the fundraising plan.

Update

The Committee met on October 10th and October 14th to finalize the fundraising toolkit and developed a Bagley Keene compliant process for council members to identify prospective donors and for staff to coordinate outreach. The toolkit is attached to this report. Once the 50th Anniversary logo is approved at the October 24th council meeting, the toolkit will be updated to include the Anniversary logo in place of the standard CAC logo.

With these materials and processes finalized, the Council has the tools, policies and procedures needed to fulfil its commitment to raise funds to produce the 50th anniversary Awards ceremony.

In addition, the Committee sent a broadcast email communication to the Council requesting each member make an end-of-year commitment to the campaign. The goal is to have 100% of Council making a monetary contribution by December 31, 2025.

The Ad Hoc Committee will continue to meet as needed to support the fundraising plan. This report was developed by staff in collaboration with the Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee.

CREATIVITY IS CALIFORNIAN



WHO WE ARE

The California Arts Council is your state arts agency. It's our job to help maintain California's unique identity by supporting the organizations, artists, and culture bearers that keep your artistic energy thriving and make our diverse communities healthy and vibrant. We envision a state of the arts, where all people flourish with universal access to and participation in creative expression.

WHAT WE DO

GRANTS

We invest in California via competitive grant programs that are administered through a multi-step public process providing support for the state's creative workforce, including:

- Arts Administration
- Creative Projects
- Individual Artists & Culture Bearers
- Organizational Operations
- Arts & Youth

PROGRAMS

We support the creative field through numerous creative initiatives, including:

- Arts in Corrections
- California Creative Economy
- California Cultural Districts
- California Poet Laureate/Teen Poet Laureate
- Poetry Out Loud

SERVICES

We provide arts and cultural resources and research to public, including:

- Evaluation and Research Reports
- Information Services
- Networking, Training & Professional Development
- Statewide Arts Opportunities Database
- Technical Assistance
- Workshops & Webinars

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL
FOUNDED
1976

OUR MISSION

Strengthening *arts*,
culture, and *creative*
expression as the
tools to cultivate
a better California
for all.



Photo courtesy of
CubaCaribe



CALIFORNIA
is **HOME**
to **MORE**
artists
than any
other
STATE

THE CAC IN ACTION

The agency is led by an executive director and chief deputy appointed by the Governor. The programmatic policies and allocations for the California Arts Council's local assistance grantmaking are set by a Council consisting of 11 Council Members; one appointed by the Senate, one by the Assembly, and nine by the Governor. Members serve terms of either two, three, or four years.

The members of the California Arts Council meet no more than eight times each year at locations across the state. Business proceedings are accessible to the public on site and via an online platform whenever possible. Meetings are governed by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act of 2004. Agendas are published to the CAC website no later than 10 days prior to the meeting date.

2026 COUNCIL MEETING DATES & LOCATIONS: *COMING SOON*

OUR VALUES

Community



Accessibility



Aesthetics



Autonomy with
Accountability



Relevance



Equity



Sustainability



Blue Line Arts, photo by James Morrison Photography

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California

Cultural

Districts

Truckee Cultural District
Photo by Bill Severson

CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICTS

Celebrating the breadth and diversity of California's extensive cultural assets

ABOUT

California is a land rich in resources. As the most populated state in the United States, California's economy rivals that of most countries, the fourth largest in the world. Hollywood, redwoods, deserts, mountains, and fertile farm country all make their home in the Golden State. But with its impressive size, geography, and economic diversity, California's cultural landscape is the strongest signifier of its identity.

California Cultural Districts shine a light on some of the best the state has to offer, highlighting the cultural legacy of its most valuable resource—its diversity. From larger, urban areas to uncharted rural locations, each district helps grow and sustain authentic arts and culture opportunities, increase the visibility of local artists, and promote socio-economic and ethnic diversity through culture and creative expression.

Since 2017, fourteen districts have served as California's initial cohort of state-designated Cultural Districts, highlighting some of the thriving cultural diversity and unique artistic identities across California.

NEW DISTRICTS COMING 2026

The application and review process to name more California Cultural Districts is underway! Up to 10 new districts will be chosen in 2026 as representatives of California's creative and cultural bounty.



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caculturaldistricts.org | arts.ca.gov | [#ArtsCA](https://twitter.com/ArtsCA)



CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICT MAP

California
Cultural
Districts



1 Eureka Cultural Arts District

Something for everyone to discover, surrounded by the redwood curtain.

2 Redding Cultural District

The gateway to true Northern California, bridging nature with arts and culture experiences.

3 Grass Valley - Nevada City Cultural District

Twin cities rich in cultural history, the arts, and innovation, deep within Gold Country.

4 Truckee Cultural District

World-class scenery in a rugged high alpine setting that catalyzes and inspires art and culture.

5 Downtown San Rafael Arts District

An urbanized nerve center for culture in the suburban outpost of Marin County.

6 Rotten City - Emeryville Cultural Arts District

An innovative district in the midst of a renaissance devoted to art and creative production.

7 SOMA Pilipinas - Filipino Cultural Heritage District

A cultural, social, arts, and service hub for Filipinos throughout Northern California.

8 The Calle 24 Latino Cultural District

An arts and culture mecca and bustling Latino enclave at the heart of San Francisco's eclectic Mission District.

9 The BLVD Cultural District

A thriving and dynamic cultural center located in California's High Desert.

10 Little Tokyo

A vital Los Angeles cultural community with more than 130 years of profound history.

11 San Pedro Arts & Cultural District

An artist community juxtaposed with industry, against the backdrop of the Pacific Ocean.

12 Oceanside Cultural District

An emerging cultural coastal town rife with theaters, museums, galleries, and practicing artists.

13 Balboa Park Cultural District

A cultural center of San Diego, captivating residents and tourists alike.

14 Barrio Logan Cultural District

A vibrant artists' community with a high concentration of creative energy rooted in Chicano history.

CALIFORNIA

TEEN POET LAUREATE



Toochi H. Samsylvanus
San Bernardino County Champion, 2025 Poetry Out Loud
Photo by Luke Cheng

Our state's new ambassador for young literary voices

The application process for the state's first-ever California Teen Poet Laureate is now open! The role offers young adult word artists within our state the unique opportunity to promote literary arts and engage with diverse communities throughout California. All eligible teenaged poets are encouraged to apply.

ABOUT

The California Teen Poet Laureate will be responsible for providing a minimum of six public readings during their two-year term. In collaboration with the California Poet Laureate, they will be required to develop and undertake a specific poetry project intended to bring the literary arts to Californians, particularly students with limited exposure to poetry. The teen poet laureate will receive an annual stipend of \$10,000 for their work in these endeavors.

AM I ELIGIBLE?

Applicants must be California residents between the ages of 13 and 19.

HOW CAN I APPLY?

Interested teen poets must submit their applications online at capoetlaureate.org on or before November 30, 2025.

QUESTIONS?

Check out our California Teen Poet Laureate Q&A page at capoetlaureate.org.

EMAIL

poetlaureate@arts.ca.gov
for any additional questions.



capoetlaureate.org

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—California—
POET LAUREATE



Photo by Luke Cheng

CALIFORNIA

POET LAUREATE

The Governor's Advocate for the Art of Poetry

The California Poet Laureate is a Governor's appointee whose mission is to advocate for the art of poetry in classrooms and boardrooms across the state, to inspire an emerging generation of literary artists, and to educate all Californians about the many poets and authors who have influenced our great state through creative literary expression. Over the course of a two-year term, the Poet Laureate provides public readings in urban and rural locations across California, educates civic and state leaders about the value of poetry and creative expression, and undertakes a significant cultural project, with one of its goals being to bring poetry to students who might otherwise have little opportunity to be exposed.

The Arts Council's Role

The California Arts Council is responsible for managing the state poet laureate nomination process, providing a stipend to cover the expenses of the state poet laureate while fulfilling the responsibilities of the role, and intermittent publishing an anthology of works of state poets laureate.

To learn more about the California Poet Laureate position or the work of current California Poet Laureate Lee Herrick, visit capoetlaureate.org.

About California Poet Laureate

LEE HERRICK

Lee Herrick is a writer and professor who teaches at Fresno City College and the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program at the University of Nevada, Reno at Lake Tahoe. A former Fresno Poet Laureate, Herrick's poetry canon explores the diversity and vitality of the California experience and the exhilarating success of the American experiment. Born in Daejeon, South Korea and adopted as an infant, he grew up in Modesto immersed in literature, art, and various cultural influences.

He is the author of four books of poetry and a contributor to many anthologies, particularly those examining the literary flourishing of California's Central Valley.

Herrick was reappointed to the position in April of 2025. His reappointment marks the first time a poet laureate has been selected to serve for a second term since the position was officially established in 2001.

POETRY OUT LOUD



County champions at the 2025 California Poetry Out Loud State Finals with Council Chair Roxanne Messina-Captor and Council Member Vicki Estrada

For more than 20 years, Poetry Out Loud has engaged high school students nationwide in discovery and learning about poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. Students gain proficiency in public speaking, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. An initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, Poetry Out Loud is administered statewide by the California Arts Council (CAC).

CALIFORNIA
POETRY
OUT LOUD



California's Poetry Out Loud is the largest program of its kind in the U.S. In 2025, the competition series celebrated its 20th anniversary, encompassing 49 counties, 235 schools, and 416 teachers, reaching more than 17,300 students statewide.

Poetry Out Loud includes both classroom learning and a tiered competition similar to a spelling bee. In the fall, high school teachers use free Poetry Out Loud teacher toolkits to teach about poetry and organize classroom recitations. Each classroom advances students to a schoolwide competition; school champions compete at the county level by mid-February. County winners then progress to California Poetry Out Loud State Finals in Sacramento, and a chance to compete in the national competition in Washington, D.C. in April.

The California Arts Council relies on State-Local Partnership (SLP) agencies to act as

county partners for California Poetry Out Loud, organizing the program in their local schools and communities. SLP agencies receive grant funds specifically to support Poetry Out Loud.

ABOUT THE CA POETRY OUT LOUD STATE FINALS

The California Arts Council will host the 2026 state finals on Sunday, March 8, and Monday, March 9, in Sacramento. Each participating county's champion will travel to Sacramento to perform in multiple rounds of poetry recitation. The top three scoring champions in Poetry Out Loud and in Poetry Ourselves, a competition of original poetry, will win awards. At the end of the finals, a state champion will be named, who will go on to represent California at the Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest beginning April 27 in Washington, D.C.

Smart needs art.

Students who learn arts at school score higher on tests, have better attendance records, significantly lower dropout rates, and are more than twice as likely to graduate from college.

Yet less than half of California's students have access. We can do better.

Sources: Americans for the Arts & Create CA

This tax season, you can help keep arts in schools by making a donation of \$1 or more to the **Keep Arts in Schools Voluntary Contribution Fund** on your 2024 state tax return. One hundred percent of your tax-deductible contribution will go toward arts education programming supported by the California Arts Council.

Do your part for tomorrow's innovators who need arts education today. Visit keepartsinschoolsfund.org to learn how.



Enriching Lives through Music / Tim Porter



NewFilmmakers Los Angeles



Dell'Arte International / Mark Larson



The Crucible

**KEEP ARTS
IN SCHOOLS**
VOLUNTARY TAX CONTRIBUTION FUND

Smart needs art. Support creativity in the classroom through your state tax return

☒ Yes. I believe in arts education for every student.

I will contribute \$ _____ to Keep Arts in Schools Voluntary Contribution Fund through my 2024 California State Tax Return.

Voluntary contributions to the Keep Arts in Schools Voluntary Contribution Fund [California Individual Tax Return form 540, Section 110 (425)] are distributed to arts programs statewide by the California Arts Council.

**KEEP ARTS
IN SCHOOLS**
VOLUNTARY TAX CONTRIBUTION FUND



KEEP THIS WITH YOUR
2024 TAX DOCUMENTS,
OR GIVE IT TO YOUR
ACCOUNTANT

California Arts Council
keepartsinschoolsfund.org

A sure sign you're a
**California
Dreamer**



CALIFORNIA ARTS PLATE

Take your support for arts education on the road with the iconic California Arts Plate

Proceeds from sales and renewals of California's Arts Plate support arts education programs for young people across California through grants from the California Arts Council, a state agency. The arts and arts education cultivate imagination, creativity, and innovation – essential skills in the 21st century global economy. The Arts Plate is a key source of California state arts funding, generating more than \$2 million per year for arts programs benefiting children and communities throughout the state.

Drivers in California can purchase standard-number plates through the DMV for \$50 with a \$40 renewal fee. Drivers who choose to enhance the plate with personalized letters and numbers may do so for \$103 with an annual \$83 renewal fee. Arts Plate sales and renewal fees may be tax deductible for individuals and businesses.



The Arts Plate image, titled "Coastline," was created in 1993 by the renowned California artist Wayne Thiebaud. The iconic palm and sunset motif are a unique artwork developed by the artist explicitly for use by the California Arts Council.

Get your Arts Plate now at
www.artsplate.org

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CALIFORNIA ARTS IN CORRECTIONS



STRENGTHENING REHABILITATION THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE

Arts in Corrections is a partnership between the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the California Arts Council, designed to increase critical thinking skills, build positive relationships and promote meaningful interactions between people experiencing incarceration and their peers, facility staff, loved ones, and other individuals and community groups both inside and outside of the boundaries of state institutions. The program is deeply tied to the state's belief in the power of the arts to inspire change, transformation, and growth.

Through Arts in Corrections, arts learning opportunities are offered in all 36 of California's state adult correctional facilities, spanning the full spectrum of art disciplines, with instruction in visual, literary, performance, media, cultural, and traditional and folk arts. The program is internationally recognized for its high-impact, innovative approach to addressing the state's critical public safety needs and rehabilitative priorities through the arts.

It's really a public safety issue, what we're dealing with. Because wouldn't you want a person in prison to come out with better skills in dealing with disappointment, obstacles, unemployment, when they come out? It seems to me that it's in all of our interests to have vigorous rehabilitation programs—and arts is absolutely essential to that.”

Academy Award Winner Tim Robbins
Artistic Director, Actors' Gang



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www.artsincorrections.org



“Character development is important to acting and adulthood. So as I continue to develop as an actor, and as a person of integrity, accountability, and responsibility—traits I’ll be defined by long after the show is over—it’s through drama therapy and Shakespeare that I find healing.”

Nythell “Nate” Collins
San Quentin State Prison Participant

We’re talking about mental health impacts, about restorative and transformative processes. This provides a pathway towards healing, and this is what we have to do in these spaces. We have to facilitate healing in a very holistic way.”

Quetzal Flores
Arts Instructor, Alliance for California Traditional Arts

BENEFITS

- 1 Reduces conflict inside institutions
- 2 Strengthens interpersonal relationships
- 3 Increases critical thinking
- 4 Develops real-world job skills
- 5 Builds positive relationships
- 6 Encourages healthy behaviors
- 7 Bridges cultural differences
- 8 Improves physical and emotional well-being

TIMELINE



1977

Prison Arts Project pilot begins

1980

AIC program created



2010

Budget crisis eliminates AIC funding



2013

CAC and CDCR partner to pilot return of AIC program

2017

AIC grows to once again reach all state 36 adult correctional facilities



2019

AIC ramps up efforts to boost program access, equity, inclusion and innovation



2021

New AIC evaluation report demonstrates impact of healing-centered prison arts programs

Photos by Peter Merts

CONTACT

artsincorrections@arts.ca.gov



CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL 50th ANNIVERSARY



Gamelan Sekar Jaya
Photo by Terry Lorant

Since our founding in 1976, the CAC has been a steadfast champion of creativity, access, and equity. By investing in over 15,000 nonprofit arts organizations, the Arts Council has helped fuel cultural vitality, educational opportunity, community development, and economic growth across California. Our support has strengthened K–12 arts education, empowered local community to thrive, and positioned the arts as powerful tools for resilience, belonging, and innovation.

Today, California's arts sector is a dynamic force shaping the state's economy, workforce, identity, and innovation. At a time when artistic expression is increasingly under threat, the CAC stands firm in its mission: ensuring every Californian has access to the transformative power of the arts.

A PIVOTAL MOMENT

Our 50th anniversary provides a rare opportunity to honor our founding trailblazers, celebrate California's leading artists and arts organizations, and recommit to our bold vision for the next 50 years.

To mark the occasion, the CAC will host a high-profile awards ceremony in 2026, in Sacramento, recognizing ten outstanding artists, arts organizations, and civic leaders. This landmark event will bring together elected officials, cultural leaders, and community voices to celebrate the past and shape the future.

Alongside this event, a yearlong series of activities will showcase the CAC's enduring impact through an interactive timeline, statewide events, and storytelling that lifts up the voices of former Council members, grantees, and communities served.

JOIN US

The Council has committed to funding this celebration entirely through private contributions — no public dollars will be used. This ensures that every gift directly supports a powerful, once-in-a-generation moment for California's arts sector.

By making a personal, tax-deductible contribution and inviting your networks to do the same, you will help ensure the success of this historic celebration. Public acknowledgment will be given to all donors, underscoring your leadership and commitment to the arts.

With your support, we can showcase the CAC's history as a testament to the power of the arts — and reinforce California's role as a national leader in creativity, equity, and cultural innovation.

This anniversary is more than a milestone; it is a call to action. Together, we can ensure that the next fifty years of the California Arts Council are even more impactful, inclusive, and visionary.

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**CALIFORNIA
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DONATION FORM

Donor Information

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please enclose a copy of this form and a check or money order made out to the
California Arts Council and mail them to:

California Arts Council
2750 Gateway Oaks | Sacramento, CA 95833
Attn: Danielle Brazell, Executive Director

Donations qualify for the purposes of a charitable contribution under Internal Revenue Code section 170(c)(1). Contact your tax preparer and let them know the California Arts Council's federal identification number is 68-0297701. Please submit check or money order only; apologies that we cannot accept cash or credit cards at this time.

☐ **I am donating to the CAC 50th Anniversary Celebration Fund**

Are you giving this donation in memory or in honor of another person?

- ☐ YES, in honor of someone
- ☐ YES, in memory of someone
- ☐ Donation from me directly

Please let us know so we can create a certificate acknowledging the donation with the appropriate information included.

- ☐ Yes, my name may be publicized on CAC promotional materials in support of the 50th Anniversary.
- ☐ No, I wish to remain anonymous and my name may not be publicized on CAC promotional materials.

By donating to the CAC, your information may be subject to California's Public Records Act (Government Code section 7920.000 et seq.).

Questions? Call 916-322-6555 or email info@arts.ca.gov

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

50th ANNIVERSARY

DONATIONS/GIFT LEVELS

LEVEL	AMOUNT	BENEFITS
Diamond	\$10K or above	Opportunity to present one of the awards (these opportunities are limited in number) and acknowledgment from the podium during the ceremonies as well as premier billing on donor wall and in program and website, and VIP Seating
Platinum	\$5K-\$9,999	Acknowledgment from the podium during the ceremonies, premier billing on donor wall and in program, and VIP Seating
Gold	\$2,500-4,999	Premier billing on donor wall and in program and website, and VIP Seating
Silver	\$1,000-\$2,499	Prominent listing on donor wall and in the program and website, and priority seating
Patron	\$250-\$999	Listing in the program, on the website, and priority seating
Supporter	\$25-\$250	Listing in the program and website, and admission to the event

October 2, 2025

First_Name Last_Name

Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

On behalf of the California Arts Council, I thank you for your generous contribution of \$XX,XXX.00. This contribution is tax deductible to the full extent allowable by law and reflects no exchange of goods and/or services.

The California Arts Council is the only statewide public funder solely dedicated to advancing the arts in our state. For over fifty years we have championed this cause, and we have every intention of building upon this mission to reach every community in California.

We are sincerely grateful for your contribution and for your deep commitment to advancing the arts in California.

Sincerely,

Roxanne Messina Captor
Chair & Co-Chair
Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary Committee

Nicola Miner
Member, California Arts Council
Co-Chair Ad Hoc 50th Anniversary
Committee

Cc: Danielle Brazell, Executive Director

This acknowledgement serves as your official receipt. Please retain for your records.

Date

Dear First_Name,

I am writing to you to invite you to be a part of the celebration of the California Arts Council's 50th anniversary!

The 50th anniversary is a pivotal moment for California to double down on its commitment to advancing the arts. Our goal is to showcase the CAC's history as a testament to the power of the arts in shaping California, reinforcing its role as a leader, innovator, and advocate for artistic expression and a state agency that serves all Californians!

To commemorate this significant milestone, the Council and staff are planning an awards ceremony where the founding Council members will be recognized. Also to be recognized with a new Arts Award will be up to ten artists, arts leaders, and arts organizations who have made a lasting, indelible, and significant mark on the artistic and cultural ecology of our state. The celebration is slated to tentatively take place on Monday, April 20, 2026, in Sacramento, before an audience of elected officials, arts leaders from around the State, and Council members past & present.

We are asking you to join this effort by helping to promote this watershed year to your friends and colleagues, and by supporting the awards ceremony through a one-time tax-deductible donation. I have included information about the Council and event sponsorship opportunities and would be happy to speak with you further and answer any questions you may have.

Warmly,

First and Last Name

California Arts Council member

TAB Y

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: Ad Hoc Partnerships Committee - Leah Goodwin and Phil Mercado
RE: Strategy Development for Keep Arts in Schools and the Arts License Plate Fund

Purpose:

To provide an update on the committee's strategy development since the June 20, 2025, memo, present the recommended goals and outreach strategies for 2026, and outline next steps for an upcoming Council discussion.

Background:

The Ad Hoc Partnerships Committee current objective is to develop a strategy to raise donations from the existing ***Keep Arts in Schools/ Tax Check Off*** & The **License Plate Fund**

The Committee seeks to leverage the momentum of the 50th Anniversary of the agency in 2026 to promote fundraising efforts for these two funds. The committee supports the Council's broader goals by identifying potential partnerships, outreach efforts, and fundraising strategies.

Activities:

The Ad Hoc Partnerships Committee met Wednesday, October 8th, and discussed the outcomes of the initial research and strategy development phase to boost contributions to the Keep Arts in Schools (KAIS) Tax Check-Off and the Arts License Plate Fund.

Funding Baseline and Opportunity

Current data confirms that the KAIS Tax Check-Off averages \$250,000 - \$350,000 per year in contributions, and the Arts License Plate Fund averages \$2.5 million per year from sales and renewals. Crucially, these funds have remained consistently at these levels for the past decade, highlighting a significant need for a refreshed, high-impact campaign to drive growth. Leveraging the 50th anniversary campaign and procuring a publicist for next year's activities are key opportunities to raise awareness around these crucial fundraising efforts and provide new avenues for engagement and support.

Research Area	Findings and Status
Costs associated with DMV brochure inclusion	Estimated cost is \$45,000 to \$50,000 for 36 million printed brochures (based on 2020 data). This establishes a baseline budget for a major marketing push.
Feasibility of a public relations campaign	Feasible. The campaign can be largely managed in-house, building on the momentum of the 50th anniversary and leveraging the expertise of the 50th anniversary event publicist.
Potential to update or reissue a modified plate for the 50th anniversary	Not feasible for the existing design. Review of the MOU with Wayne Thiebaud confirms permission only for the entire image, not portions. Any change would require an entirely new image/plate reissuance.

Fund Development Recommendations & Feedback: Discussion included identifying potential partners such as public health, transportation, economic development, and arts-in-parks entities. A quarterly strategic focus was presented as potential promotional strategy for each fund. A fundraising strategy blending both social media and paid advertisements and informed by the 50th Anniversary contracted publicist could touch on the themes and placements as listed below.

Timing opportunities include:

- Jan-Apr 2026: Tax Filing Window
- May-Jul 2026: Summer Activities and Travel
- Aug-Sept 2026: Back to School, Filing Extension
- Oct-Dec 2026: Year-End Impact Summary, Looking to the Future

Timeline:

- November 2025: Committee meeting to confirm outreach goals and finalize outreach strategies.
- December 12, 2025: Committee report out and council discussion on campaign implementation options.

Report Prepared by Committee Staff: Carissa Gutierrez, Director of Public Affairs, Matthew Canty, Legislative Affairs Manager in collaboration with the Ad Hoc Partnerships Committee.

TAB Z

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 10/24/2025



Policy Memorandum

2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
T: (916) 322-6555 | F: (916) 322-6575
www.arts.ca.gov

DATE: October 24, 2025
TO: All Council Members
From: Legislative Committee – Rick Stein and Roxanne Messina Captor
RE: Legislative Committee Report to Council

Purpose:

To introduce recently hired Legislative Manager Matthew Canty to Legislative Committee Members, provide an overview of the Legislative Committee Charter, and discuss strategic goals for next year.

Background:

The Legislative Committee shall develop materials and strategies for Council's engagement with the Governor and Legislature, provide updates on CAC government affairs activities, and make recommendations to the Council.

Activities:

The Legislative Committee met Monday, September 22. Council members Rick Stein and Roxanne Messina Captor were in attendance along with CAC staff Chief Deputy Director Michelle Radmand and Legislative Manager Matthew Canty.

The council reviewed the Legislative Committee Charter and agreed to the following action items:

- Draft an updated list of members of the Legislature with term-limit information.
- Strategize and collaborate to ensure the Council remains engaged with the Legislature.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with arts and culture organizations that may directly impact policy and budget appropriations.
- Seek personal stories from Legislators, Council Members, and Community relating to the value of Arts and Culture programs.

Timeline:

- October 23, 2025 - Deliver updated list of members of the Legislature

Report prepared by: Legislative Manager, Matthew Canty, with Chief Deputy Director Michelle Radmand