



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](http://www.arts.ca.gov)

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING  
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL MEETING**

**Friday, June 26, 2026**

**10 A.M. – 2:50 P.M.**

**On Location/Virtual Hybrid Meeting**

**London Nelson Community Center Auditorium  
301 Center Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

**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.	<b>1. Call to Order</b>	N. Miner
10:00 A.M. (3 min)	<b>2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum</b>	E. Gollub
10:03 A.M. (2 min)	<b>3. Land and Peoples Acknowledgement</b>	R. Hirabayashi
10:05 A.M. (5 min)	<b>4. Opening Remarks &amp; Community Agreements</b>	N. Miner
10:10 A.M. (5 min)	<b>5. Welcome Remarks</b> Jim Brown, Executive Director, Arts Council of Santa Cruz	J. Brown
10:15 A.M. (5 min)	<b>6. Chair’s Report (TAB A)</b>	N. Miner
10:20 A.M. (5 min)	<b>7. Executive Director’s Report (TAB B)</b>	D. Brazell

<p>10:25 A.M. (5 min)</p>	<p><b>8. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings (TAB C)</b></p> <p><i>Council will vote to approve the following minutes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Meeting – April 20, 2026</li> <li>• Council Meeting – May 15, 2026</li> </ul>	<p>N. Miner</p>
<p>10:30 A.M. (35 min)</p>	<p><b>9. PRESENTATION: Arts and Youth (TAB D)</b></p> <p><i>Staff presentation on the Arts and Youth grant program (AAY)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff &amp; Grantee Presentation (20 min)</li> <li>• Discussion (15 min)</li> </ul>	<p>J. Miller Tandy Beal, Founder, Tandy Beal &amp; Company</p>
<p>11:05 A.M. (35 min)</p>	<p><b>10. PRESENTATION: Individual Artists Fellowship (TAB E)</b></p> <p><i>Staff presentation on the Individual Artists Fellowship grant program (IAF)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff &amp; Grantee Presentation (20 min)</li> <li>• Discussion (15 min)</li> </ul>	<p>J. Miller Tamara Liu, Grants Program Manager, Arts Council Santa Cruz Adela Najarro, IAF fellow</p>
<p>11:40 A.M. (30 min)</p>	<p><b>11. PRESENTATION (TAB F):</b></p> <p><i>Staff presentation on the impacts of GEN consolidation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation (15 min)</li> <li>• Discussion (15 min)</li> </ul>	<p>R. Ratzkin</p>
<p>12:10 P.M. (30 min)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>WORKING LUNCH</b></p>	
<p>12:40 P.M. (25 min)</p>	<p><b>12. DISCUSSION: FY26-27 Allocations (TAB G)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation (10 min)</li> <li>• Discussion (15 min)</li> </ul>	<p>N. Miner</p>

<p>1:05 P.M. (45 min)</p>	<p><b>13. General Public Comment</b></p> <p><i>Two forms of general public comment will be offered:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Comments will be accepted during the meeting in person or over Zoom.</i></li> <li>2) <i>Written comment submissions will also be accepted online prior to and up through 5 p.m. on the second business day following the close of the meeting.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>Live public comments may be limited to two minutes per person and 30 minutes in total, as allowed by Bagley-Keene.</i></p>	<p>Q. Moore</p>
<p>1:50 P.M. (20 min)</p>	<p><b>14. Committee/ Ad Hoc Updates (TAB H)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative Committee</li> <li>• Equity Committee</li> <li>• Ad Hoc 50th Arts Awards Panel Committee</li> </ul>	<p>R. Stein</p> <p>R. Hirabayashi V. Estrada</p> <p>L. Goodwin</p>
<p>2:10 P.M. (15 min)</p>	<p><b>15. In Memoriam</b></p>	<p>N. Miner</p>
<p>2:25 P.M. (20 min)</p>	<p><b>16. Open Council Discussion</b></p>	<p>N. Miner</p>
<p>2:45 P.M. (5 min)</p>	<p><b>17. Closing Remarks</b></p> <p><i>Call for agenda items for August 15, 2026</i></p>	<p>N. Miner</p>
<p>2:50 P.M. (5 min)</p>	<p><b>18. Adjournment</b></p>	<p>N. Miner</p>

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



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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 make sure you request no later than June 22 at 5 p.m. Please direct your request to Public Affairs Specialist Kimberly Brown at [kimberly.brown@arts.ca.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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 A

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021

Chair Report  
June 2026  
Roxanne Messina Captor

Hello to all of you. Unfortunately, I am in Europe and cannot attend this meeting. However, I have left this meeting in Vice Chair Miner's capable hands.

As we move forward, I carry with me a deep belief: **the arts are not an accessory to civic life—they are essential to its soul.**

The Senate hearing with the Joint Committee on the Arts, emphasized the creative economy for artists. I spoke from personal experience in needing my parents to co-sign for an apartment for me even though I was a professional working dancer. The terms "When are you going to get a real job" and "arts professions are flaky" does not help one's self esteem.

The state is still working through budget cuts. The CAC will feel the increase or decrease in this initiative.

We are working through the Tribal Grant which has been discussed for some time. The

#### **Local Impact (LI) Program:**

The Local Impact program continued to serve as a backbone for small, deeply community-rooted arts organizations. The Impact Projects purpose is to support collaborative projects that center artists and artistic practice in responding to issues experienced by historically and systemically under-resourced communities, including but not limited to, social, political, and economic inequalities.

#### **State-Local Partners (SLP) & Cultural Districts:**

The Council strengthened statewide infrastructure by supporting 53 county-designated local arts agencies

#### **Community Engagement & Cultural Partnership:**

This year, I had the privilege of engaging directly with artists, administrators, educators, and cultural custodians statewide. Through convenings, site visits, and dialogues, we heard the needs of communities and celebrated their successes.

These engagements affirmed:

- The importance of storytelling as cultural preservation.
- The need to support creative workers as essential workers. Demonstrated by the Creative Economic Workforce Initiative.

- The power of arts education to transform young lives.

Our partnerships with state agencies continue to advance cross-sector work that strengthens communities far beyond the arts alone.

### **Challenges & Forward Momentum:**

While the arts sector continues to show resilience, we recognize the challenges ahead. The Council remains committed to advocating for greater public investment in the arts and to developing sustainable pathways for creative careers.

### **Closing Reflections:**

Serving as Chair of the California Arts Council has been a profound honor. I am inspired every day by the vision and courage of California's creative communities.

CAC demonstrates the profound impact of sustained public investment in the arts. The numbers tell one story; the lived experiences tell another. Everywhere I traveled—community centers, theaters, classrooms, cultural districts, correctional facilities—I witnessed the same truth; Creativity heals, connects, and transforms.

The CAC's programs reflect the collective vision of thousands of Californians who believe in a more vibrant, inclusive, and imaginative future.

# TAB B

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021



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June 26, 2026

Executive Director's Report

Dear Council,

I am pleased to provide the following update on California Arts Council (CAC) programs, services, and agency activities:

The June business meeting of the Council includes critical presentations on the Arts and Youth (AAY) and Individual Artists Fellowship (IAF) grant programs and a report back on the consolidation of the General Operating Support grant programs. In addition, Council will engage in an important discussion about FY26-27 grant allocations. Each presentation and discussion item has been strategically added to this agenda in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

The content of each Council meeting serves as a building block to the next. Presentations and discussions are critical to informing Council and preparing the body to make informed voting decisions on programs, funding allocations, and strategic priorities that will guide the agency's priorities over the next five to seven years.

Setting meeting dates and locations annually positions the Council and the agency for success by ensuring the needs of the field we serve are met. Council voted on the dates and location for its 2026 business meetings in December and opted to reduce the number of meetings from eight to six (with the option of two additional meetings if needed). A reduction of public business meetings requires staff to re-prioritize workflow and places a heightened requirement for Council participation. The truncated Council meeting schedule is doable if we all fulfil our prospective roles.

In partnership with Council committees, staff work diligently to prepare briefing materials, reports, and memorandums. Please review the materials in this Council book in its entirety. Formulate your questions and feedback and, as always, please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions or concerns.

**1. FY26-27 BUDGET ACT** - As per the state constitution, both houses of Legislature submitted their response to the Governor’s FY26-27 budget on June 15, 2026. At the time of this writing, there are no changes to the agency’s local assistance budget, which currently stands at \$24,300,000. This increase and net restoration of \$4,000,000 from FY25-26 is due to the 2-year budget solution (reduction) of FY23-24.

**2. FY26-27 GRANT CYCLE** - I’m pleased to report that the agency 2,682 eligible applications for its FY26-27 grants cycle. The breakdown reflects the total number of eligible applicants, number of first-time applicants, and the percentage of applicants in the lowest quartiles of the Healthy Places Index.

Program	Applications	% 1st Applicants	4 <sup>th</sup> Quartile of HPI
Arts and Youth	705	26%	22%
General Operating Support	1388	26%	21%
Impact Projects	532	28%	24%
State-Local Partner/M	57	4%	27% & 100%

**3. FY 25–26 GRANT CYCLE** - All payments for the FY25-26 grant cycle have been made in accordance with the State’s Contracting Manual. One grant was returned in the amount of \$19,500.00. It was reallocated equally to the State-Local Partner Mentorship grantees in accordance with Council’s prior approval for the Executive Director to determine the best use for any returned local assistance funds.

**4. OPERATIONS** - The Director of Public Affairs has resigned from her position, effective June 12, 2026. We congratulate Director Guitierrez on her new endeavor and wish her continued success in her illustrious career. The position will be reopened in the coming weeks and will likely take up to six months to backfill. Until the position is filled, Chief Deputy Radmand will oversee the Public Affairs Unit in addition to her current duties.

**5. AMERICA250** - The CAC, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, is creating a communications toolkit to support cultural events and activities associated with America250. In addition, California Poet Laureate Lee Herrick’s poem “My California” was included in the official semi quincentennial time capsule.

**6. RESEARCH AND POLICY BRIEFS** - The national service organization dedicated to serving all state arts agencies is the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). This organization is solely dedicated to advocating for state arts agencies and the National Endowment for the Arts, providing authoritative data

and research as well as a great network and community to state arts agency staff and councils.

NASAA recently released [A Guide to Promoting Statewide Strategies in the Arts and Health](#), a report that includes key recommendations for state arts agencies that are interested in developing arts and health initiatives. As we are preparing to develop the next strategic plan for the CAC, this may be a growth opportunity for consideration.

As we look toward the immediate future, CAC staff will continue with the processing of grant applications through the peer panel review process, development of the Native American Grant program and the Teen Poet Laureate program, launching a revised technical assistance program, and implementing the strategic planning process in accordance with the RFP.

Please let me know if additional information regarding any of these activities or programs would be helpful.

Respectfully submitted,



**Danielle Brazell**  
Executive Director

# TAB C

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021

Minutes of Public Meeting  
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL  
Monday, April 20, 2026  
Sacramento, California

**Minutes of Public Meeting  
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL  
Monday, April 20, 2026  
6:30 P.M. – 8 P.M.  
On Location  
Sacramento Memorial Auditorium  
1515 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814**

The members of the California Arts Council convened in Sacramento to celebrate the agency's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, honor its founding Council, and present awards to influential artists, creatives, and culture bearers listed in the minutes below.

**Council Members Present In-Person:**

Council Chair Roxanne Messina Captor  
Council Member Roque Barros  
Council Member Gerald Clarke  
Council Member Caleb Duarte  
Council Member Vicki Estrada  
Council Member Leah Goodwin  
Council Member Roy Hirabayashi  
Council Member Alex Israel  
Council Member Dorka Keehn  
Council Member Phil Mercado  
Council Member Rick Stein

**Arts Council Staff Present:**

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director  
Michelle Radmand, Chief Deputy Director  
Sylmia Britt, Deputy Director  
Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services  
Gloriela Garcia, Director of Operations  
Carissa Gutierrez, Director of Public Affairs  
Elisa Gollub, Arts Program Manager  
Josy Miller, 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  
Kala Kowatha, IT Specialist  
Leslie Giovannini, Arts Program Specialist

Natalie Peeples, Arts Program Specialist  
Carlos Casillas, Arts Program Specialist  
Emily Taggart, Arts Program Specialist  
Gabrielle Rosado, Arts Program Specialist  
Matthew Canty, Legislative Affairs Manger  
Annastasia Wolfe Griffin, MA, Policy and  
Records Management Coordinator

### **1. Call to Order**

Chair Messina Captor called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

### **2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum**

Public Affairs Director Gutierrez called the roll and quorum was established with Council Members stating their name and profession.

### **3. Land and People's Acknowledgement**

Raquel Williams, Vice Chairwoman of the Wilton Rancheria Tribe provided the land and Peoples acknowledgement.

### **4. Opening Remarks**

Chair Roxanne Messina Captor welcomed the honorees, awardees, and attendees to the agency's Council meeting and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Her Chair's report is available [at this link](#).

### **5. Director's Report**

Director Danielle Brazell provided her remarks on the agency's 50 years of service to the state of California and its artists and arts community. Director Brazell's report can be found [here](#).

### **6. Presentation: Recognizing Founding Council Members with Certifications**

Chair Roxanne Messina Captor invited all founding members to the stage to accept their certificates from Council Member Stein. Certificates were presented to:

- William Allaudin Mathieu (not present)
- Gary Snyder
- Peter Coyote

- Suzanne Jackson
- Luis Valdez
- Ruth Asawa (in memory) – Paul Lanier accepted on her behalf
- Noah Purifoy (in memory) – Joe Lewis accepted on his behalf
- Karney Hodge (in memory)
- Alexander Mackendrick (in memory)

Founding Council Member Peter Coyote spoke on behalf of all founding members about the formation of the Council and the importance of its purpose within state government.

### **7. Remarks from Senator Ben Allen**

Senator Allen provided remarks on California's powerful Creative Economy and the impact of arts and culture

### **8. Remarks from Speaker Robert Rivas**

Speaker Rivas offered remarks on the importance of the arts for all and in his life recognizing Luis Valdez and El Teatro Campesino as an influential organization in his life growing up in San Benito County. Speaker Rivas also made mention of the impact of CAC's Arts in Corrections programming on transforming the lives of incarcerated Californians.

### **9. Presentation of Arts Awards by California Poet Laureate Lee Herrick**

Herrick provided a brief biography of each awardee before presenting the awards to:

- Cheech Marin
- Mildred Howard
- Magic Theatre by Sarah Nina Hayon
- Sage Romero
- San Jose Taiko, Executive Director Wisa Uemura and Artistic Director Franco Imperial
- Josie Talamantez
- Luis Valdez (*Award presented by Álvaro Daniel Márquez, Senior Arts and Culture Officer, California Community Foundation*)
- David Gaffen
- Barbara Kruger
- Charles Ray

### **10. Presentation of the poem "My California" by California Poet Laureate Lee Herrick**

### **11. Closing Remarks**

Minutes of Public Meeting  
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL  
Monday, April 20, 2026  
Sacramento, California

Chair Roxanne Messina Captor thanks the attendees for joining the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and awards ceremony and asks the audience to grab a cupcake and enjoy the sounds of the Sacramento Pop Choir, seated in the balcony, as they exit.

## **12. Adjournment**

Chair Roxanne Messina Captor adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm.

- **CAC PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSIONS  
COUNCIL MEETING/50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event  
APRIL 20, 2026**

- **Pat Bitton (She/Her/Hers)  
Humboldt County**

Just wondering if this event will be streamed online, since Sacramento is a loooooong way away.

- **Ann Michel Tuomey (She/Her/Hers)  
Arts 2 Me LLC, Contra Costa County**

As Twyla Tharp said, "Art is the only way to run away without leaving home." Art and creativity allow for escape and unity. Culture leads. Prioritize it.

- **Anonymous**

Looking forward to the event!

- **Kyong Lee (She/Her/Hers)  
Kwang Myung Mission, Los Angeles County**

Subject: Commemorating 50 Years of Visionary Art and Architecture

Congratulations to the California Arts Council on your 50th anniversary. As the Chief Executive of Kwang Myung Mission and a professional architectural designer, I am honored to share my vision for the future of California's cultural landscape.

Currently, I am leading the Sun Village Project in Los Angeles County—a sanctuary and cultural hub designed to integrate sustainable modular architecture with innovative urban farming. My architectural vision focuses on "Eco-Healing," utilizing solar energy and organic structures to create spaces that serve both as artistic landmarks and community sanctuaries.

In tandem with this, I am developing a cinematic epic titled "Creation," utilizing 8K and IMAX technology to push the boundaries of immersive storytelling. I believe that the next 50 years of California arts should be defined by this synergy: where architectural design, advanced technology, and environmental stewardship meet to heal and inspire our communities.

I hope the Council continues to support multidisciplinary projects that bridge the gap between functional architecture and transformative art. I look forward to contributing to California's vibrant future.

- **Galen Hazelhofer (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Sacramento County**

Thank you for making the arts important!

- **Catherine Humphers Smith (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Terrible Adult Chamber Orchestra • TACO, Santa Clara County**

I have followed the CAC with interest as someone who runs a small nonprofit in Santa Clara County with a spin-off group in Los Angeles County. I am very proud to be a Californian and to know we have this wonderful statewide organization supporting creativity throughout our state, encouraging collaboration and community building, arts enrichment and education for all ages, and nurturing the cultural life of all Californians. Congratulations on a successful 50-year run, with all best wishes for continued growth into our futures.

- **Anonymous (He/Him/His)**  
**Fresno County**

There's an impression that CAC promotes works by artists and authors who are recipients of CAC's support and is oblivious of superior works by others.

- **Daniel Omar (He/Him/His)**  
**Artqe, Los Angeles County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: Arts and Public Media; Artists in Communities;**  
**State-Local Partnership**

I am very inspired with opportunities where arts turn to reality.

- **Sandra Richardson (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Richardsonlees Author/Artist, Los Angeles County**

Congratulations I am very honored to attend your 50th Anniversary celebration! Kudos

- **Jorge Santana (Prefer not to answer)**  
**Santana Press and Travel, Sacramento County**

I commend all those who have worked to recognize artists.

- **Colton Dennis (He/Him/His)**  
**Merced County Arts Council, Merced County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps; California Cultural Districts; Arts Education Exposure; State-Local Partnership**

Happy 50th Anniversary, California Arts Council! Thank you for your many decades of support and partnership through arts and culture. Together, we make California great!

- **Michelle Amador (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Nevada County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps**

Congrats to 50 years of California recognizing the power of the arts in every aspect of our daily lives! Here's to 50 more with expanded funding!

- **Nancy Hill (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Shasta County Arts Council, Shasta County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: California Cultural Districts; Impact Projects; Local Impact; State-Local Partnership**

Thank you to the California Arts Council for all your support and hard work in our state. You rock. Happy 50th Birthday. You only get better with age.

- **sujata tibrewala (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Indian American Artists Association, Santa Clara County**

Love the work that you do, maybe we can work on affordable housing for artists

- **Gioia Fonda (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Artist/Community College Art Professor (Sacramento City College), Sacramento County**

Just thank you. Thank you for tonight and thank you for what you all do each day for both artists and the people of our beautiful state. I feel inspired and will carry that energy with me beyond the evening.

- **Eric Hansen (He/Him/His)**  
**Sacramento County**

Thank you for a wonderful celebration of 50 amazing years! Laura, my wife, and I have known Josie Talamantez for over 30 years. We are honored to celebrate with her and all facets of the California Arts Council!



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**Minutes of Public Meeting  
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL  
Friday, May 15, 2026  
10 A.M. – 1:50 P.M.**

**On Location/Hybrid Meeting  
Madelyn Helling Library  
980 Helling Way  
Nevada City, CA 95959**

The members of the California Arts Council convened in Nevada City 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 Member Roque Barros  
Council Member Caleb Duarte  
Council Member Vicki Estrada  
Council Member Leah Goodwin  
Council Member Roy Hirabayashi

**Council Members Present Remotely:**

Council Vice Chair Nicola Miner  
Council Member Dorka Keehn

**Arts Council Staff Present:**

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director  
Michelle Radmand, Chief Deputy Director  
Sylmia Britt, Deputy Director  
Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services  
Josy Miller, Arts Program Manager  
Jonathan Estrada, Arts Program Manager  
Megan Morgan, Race & Equity 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 10:03 AM.

### **2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum**

Arts Program Manager Josy Miller called the roll and quorum was established. Five members of the Council were present in Nevada City, and three Council members were present virtually on Zoom.

### **3. Land and People's Acknowledgement**

Chair Messina Captor invited Nevada City Arts Council Executive Director Eliza Tudor to stand in for Shelly Covert, Tribal Spokesperson for the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan and Executive Director of HUSWEJ, to provide the land and people's acknowledgement. Tudor confirmed the meeting was being held on the original lands of the Nisenan and also recognized the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California.

### **4. Opening Remarks & Community Agreements**

Chair Messina Captor and Council Member Goodwin led 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. Welcome to Nevada City**

The Council was welcomed to Nevada City and to the library by Nevada County Arts Council Executive Director Eliza Tudor, District 3 Supervisor Lisa Swartout, and Nevada County Librarian Nick Wilczek.

### **6. Chair's Report**

The Chair's report can be read in its entirety [here](#) and emphasized the need for the arts and the demonstrative value of our state's creative economy in uncertain times.

### **7. Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Danielle Brazell presented Council her [full written report](#), covering 50<sup>th</sup> events, the 2026-27 budget cycle, grant programs and related work, Keep Arts in Schools, and other programmatic updates.

## 8. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings

Chair Messina Captor then presented the minutes from [February 6](#). As there were no objections from the rest of the Council, the minutes were approved.

## 9. VOTING ITEM: 2027-2032 CAC Strategic Plan

Council members Hirabayashi and Keehn [presented the 2027-32 CAC Strategic Plan goal and priority recommendations to Council on behalf of the Strategic Framework Committee](#). The presentation covered the background and review of the committee's activities, framework progress and October 2025 Council discussion, identifying new strategic planning priorities for the Council body's vote.

### Motion:

**Made by:** Council Member Hirabayashi

**Seconded by:** Council Member Keehn

The Strategic Framework Committee recommends that Council vote to approve the following goal and priorities for the 2026/27 strategic planning process:

The overarching project goal is to reflect on and revise the current strategic framework which expires in 2027. The planning priorities will include:

- Strengths/Weakness/Opportunities/Threats analysis (SWOT), emphasizing current opportunities of CAC.
- Partnership framework for State-Local Partners and other networks to increase support for arts and culture across the state.
- Strategies for inter-agency partnership with state agencies and state-led initiatives.
- Long-term grants strategy that includes a framework for artistic quality.
- Consideration and revised plan for Council committee structure, training, and meetings.
- Approved and detailed strategy, timeline and performance metrics for the next 5 to 7 years that is grounded in equity principles and adheres to the CAC mission and vision.

### Discussion:

Council considered but ultimately decided against changing from a SWOT to a SOAR (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results) analysis and talked about the importance of embedding budget fluctuations and incorporating the crossover of work from all committees, in particular the Equity Committee, into the development of the strategic plan.

Chair Messina Captor then called for a vote.

**Vote Tally:**

- Vice Chair Miner – yes
- Barros – yes
- Duarte – yes
- Estrada – yes
- Goodwin – yes
- Hirabayashi – yes
- Keehn - yes
- Chair Messina Captor – yes

**Result:** Motion passed (8 yays – unanimous)

**10. PRESENTATION: Native American Artist Grant Program**

Arts Program Manager Elisa Gollub presented to Council the [current state of development for the Native American Artist Grant Program](#).

**13. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

This item was moved ahead of item 11 on the agenda. Chair Messina Captor provided Council with both the [Ad Hoc 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee](#) and [Legislative Committee](#) reports.

**11. PRESENTATION: Folk and Traditional Arts Program**

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.

**12:20-12:50 WORKING LUNCH**

**12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

All public comment listed at the end of these minutes.

**14. Open Council Discussion**

**15. In Memoriam**

Council member Goodwin led a tribute honoring individuals who passed away in April

and early May of this year:

- Donlyn Lyndon, Sea Ranch architect (died April 5, age 90)
- Afrika Bambaataa, DJ & hip-hop pioneer (born Lance Taylor, died April 9, age 68)
- Flo Oy Wong, Chinese American artist born in Oakland, California (died April 11)
- James Hayward, San Francisco-born abstract painter (died April 16)
- Michael Tilson Thomas (died April 22), American conductor, pianist, and educator who served as the music director of the San Francisco Symphony
- Ruth Slenczynska (died April 22), celebrated pianist and teacher
- Dean Tavoularis, an Oscar-winning art director and production designer (died April 23, age 93)
- George Herms, one of the last Beat Generation artists, practitioner of California assemblage (died on April 24, age 90)
- Alex Ligertwood, Scottish vocalist best known for his 15-year tenure with Santana (died April 30, age 79)
- Ted Turner, American businessman, television producer, media proprietor, and philanthropist (died May 6)

## **16. Closing Remarks/17. Adjournment**

Chair Messina Captor adjourned the meeting at 1:53PM.

## Public Comment

- **KYONG LEE (She/Her/Hers)**  
**KWANG MYUNG MISSION and THE CITY, Los Angeles County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: 2027-2032 CAC Strategic Plan**

Subject: Comment on 2027-2032 Strategic Plan: Sun Village Cultural Infrastructure

To the CAC Members,

On behalf of KWANG MYUNG MISSION (501(c)(3)) and THE CITY, I submit this comment on the 2027-2032 Strategic Plan.

We are developing the “SUN VILLAGE PRAYER & RETREAT GARDEN PARK” in Antelope Valley (CA 93543). This \$5 million project will be a cultural and spiritual landmark for an underserved region.

We urge the CAC to:

- Establish Large-Scale Capital Grant Categories: Create funding for physical infrastructure projects beyond small-scale grants.
- Prioritize Regional Equity: Focus on high-impact projects in unincorporated areas like Sun Village.
- Empower Lasting Legacies: Support permanent cultural assets for future generations.

[Question]

Does the 2027-2032 Strategic Plan include a specific funding stream for large-scale capital infrastructure projects—like the Sun Village Garden Park—to create permanent cultural assets in underserved regions?

Sincerely,

Dr. Kyong S. Lee (Mary)

[kyongusa77@hotmail.com](mailto:kyongusa77@hotmail.com)

- **Joti (She/Her/Hers), San Francisco County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief; California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners; Impact Projects; Local Impact**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

My organization is a former grantee. We are fiscally sponsored. In the past couple of years, we changed our structure from sole proprietorship to LLC, following legal and accounting advice. We are still fiscally sponsored by Dancers' Group. This structure works very well for us, as we are able to accept earned income from performances and classes through our organization, while also applying for grants through our fiscal sponsor. We are a small, bipoc/immigrant led dance organization, and we have been the kind of organization CAC has been proud to support. However, because of the LLC status, we are no longer eligible to apply. I ask that you reconsider this restriction. We are fulfilling the mission of CAC. We use all of our earned and contributed income to bring art to our communities. The LLC restriction is keeping out some organizations that exemplify the kind of work that CAC aims to support. Thank you.

- **Anonymous, San Francisco County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief; Artists in Communities; Impact Projects; Local Impact**

I see that the California Arts Council is focussing on equity. I encourage you to also make the grant application process equitable. This means:

- 1) less writing (organizations need to have a professional grant writer in order to answer the questions.
- 2) allow applicants to submit videos over three minutes and give time stamps (this is standard and means that smaller orgs who don't have someone whose full time job is to write grants can still apply.)
- 3) Orgs that are fiscally sponsored are often LLCs or S-Corps. They should be able to apply

- **Nancy Heins-Glaser (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Independent arts advocate and member of Fallbrook Art Association, Fallbrook Center for The Arts, TACA/founding member : The Arts And Culture Alliance, San Diego County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: 2027-2032 CAC Strategic Plan; 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

As a general public comment it has been noted that inland arts groups throughout San Diego County now have leadership for Inland North County. as a resident of an unincorporated community how can we be assured that smaller groups receive at least review of their submissions for arts advocacy? As to voting on itemd 2027-2032 it is my undersrtanding the county already visited the arts budget and that Todd Gloris's influence was primarily on the city arts budget.

I understood the economic development council's in each area were being consulted regarding a percent of that re-development pool of money should be given to the arts as exists in states like New Mexico. With the arts being such an income generator how is this even being discussed? It seems counter-intuitive for any group, mayor, city, entity to fight the arts funding given the economic return on investment. Is there a formula being used based on regions we average citizens don't know about?

- **Kimberly Parker**  
**Nevada County Economic Development Office, Nevada County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

I am Kimberly Parker with Nevada County's Economic Development Office. Thank you for the CAC's investment in rural communities where the creative economy serves as a significant economic driver for our region. I want to thank Eliza Tudor for her leadership in our county. Her work at the local, regional, and state level helped elevate the role of arts and culture as an important part of rural economic vitality.

Arts and culture are not simply amenities. They are part of our economic infrastructure. Nevada County is home to two of California's cultural districts, Grass Valley/Nevada City and Truckee. Those designations strengthen community identity, support local artists and creative businesses, and create the kind of authentic places that draw visitors, residents, and entrepreneurs.

Impact findings show the creative sector annually contributes \$66 million to our economy supporting 1,400 jobs. That impact also benefits restaurants, retailers, lodging, event producers, and small businesses that depend on vibrant downtowns and year-round activity.

For rural counties like Nevada County, cultural districts help us compete. They support placemaking, talent attraction, entrepreneurship, and quality of life, all of which matter to long-term economic resilience.

I want to thank the CA Arts Council for recognizing that arts and culture are essential economic infrastructure, and for partnering with rural communities like ours to strengthen both local identity and local economies.

- **Rory O'Farrell (He/Him/His)**  
**Tahoe Truckee Media, Nevada County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Is this the best we can do? When I join this May 15 meeting in Nevada County, the zoom view is at the back of a library room. The zoom meeting is on a tiny screen on the far wall. There is nothing accessible about the meeting at all. The audio is fine, but why do you not give out the link to actually JOIN the meeting?

- **Courtney Wadman (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Nevada Union High School Dance Department, Nevada County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today, and thank you for everything this Council does to support and strengthen the arts in our communities. My name is Courtney Wadman, and for the past sixteen years, I have been the full-time Director of Dance at Nevada Union High School. For several years, our program has provided students with rigorous dance training, performance opportunities, and leadership development within the public school setting. We also have a vibrant community enrichment program, offering classes that are open to the public as a fundraiser for our program. Furthermore, we have created a new Performance Ensemble Honors course, focused on leadership, community service, and work-based learning. Students will have opportunities not only to perform, but also to serve as teaching assistants, rehearsal assistants, production interns, and arts leadership trainees. We're especially excited about building stronger partnerships with local studios and arts organizations, so students can gain real-world mentorship and professional experience within our local arts community. Every dollar raised through our community programs goes directly back to supporting students through scholarships, free training opportunities, cultural experiences, and future paid apprenticeship pathways. We truly see this work as part of a larger vision for strengthening arts access and arts education here in Nevada County.

- **Dominique Johnson (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Stanislaus Arts Council, Stanislaus County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps; California Cultural Districts; Artists in Schools; State-Local Partnership**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

PT 1 Dominique Johnson, Executive Director of the Stanislaus Arts Council, one of your State-Local Partners representing Stanislaus County, home to one of the newly designated Cultural Districts the Dos Rios Arts & Culture District, as well as more than 550,000 Californians, where the creative economy is not theoretical; it is deeply human, community-centered, and essential to both economic vitality and quality of life.

I first want to express sincere gratitude to the California Arts Council and its dedicated staff for their continued partnership, leadership, and investment in communities, specifically rural communities like ours across California.

In addition to my role at the Stanislaus Arts Council, I actively serve in the California Creative Corps Working Group, the North Valley Creative Economy Working Group, and serve as Vice Chair of my communities' local Culture Commission. Across each of these collaborative efforts, I can attest there is strong alignment with the priorities identified in this strategic plan, particularly around workforce development, cultural infrastructure, and ensuring that rural and Central Valley communities are not left behind in California's broader creative economy conversations.

- **Dominique Johnson (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Stanislaus Arts Council, Stanislaus County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pt 2 I acknowledge and thank the Council for the thoughtful and intentional work that has gone and is planned to go into the Creative Economy Strategic Plan. The commitment to listening, engaging stakeholders across regions, and developing a framework grounded in equity, workforce sustainability, and regional inclusion is both meaningful and necessary.

The plan accurately recognizes that much of California's creative workforce is made up of freelancers, cultural workers, nonprofit organizations, and sole proprietors navigating economic instability, limited access to benefits, and rapidly evolving technologies that increasingly impact creative ownership and sustainability.

In communities like ours, these are lived realities affecting artists, educators, performers, and nonprofit leaders every day.

The work being advanced through the Creative Economy Strategic Plan is deeply aligned with the conversations and collaborative efforts already taking place across many of our regions and networks. Through the California Creative Corps Adminstrating Organizations Working Group, the North Valley Creative Economy Working Group, and our local and regional cultural initiatives, we are actively engaging in discussions around workforce sustainability, cultural infrastructure, economic impact, and equitable access to opportunity within the creative sector.

- **Dominique Johnson (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Stanislaus Arts Council, Stanislaus County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pt 3 We look forward to inviting the California Arts Council staff into these important conversations as partners in this work, particularly as we collectively explore how data is being gathered, interpreted, and utilized to better understand the needs, challenges, and economic contributions of creative communities throughout California's central valley. We know this data is essential in helping guide future investment, inform policy, strengthen regional strategies, and ensure that rural and historically underrepresented communities are meaningfully included in the state's creative economy framework.

What this strategic planning process reinforces is that investment in the arts is also an investment in jobs, workforce development, small businesses, tourism, cultural identity, and the long-term resilience of California communities. We are grateful for the California Arts Council's leadership, vision, and continued commitment to advancing this work in partnership with communities across the state.

Thank you for your time and leadership.

- **Tsal'gyur Starbuck (She/Her/Hers)**  
**Nevada Union Dance, Nevada County**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

I am Tsal'gyur Starbuck, founder and director for the Nevada Union Dance community enrichment program at the Grass Valley Museum and Cultural Center. I performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Ballet. Beginning this year, this program will offer year-round pre-professional ballet training alongside performances, community enrichment and all-abilities dance and movement classes for all ages. At the heart of this work is collaboration. Arts grow stronger when organizations, educators, performers, and community members actively support one another. We are inspired by the belief that art belongs to everyone. Our responsibility as educators and cultural stewards is helping more people meaningfully participate in the arts. Classical ballet has often been viewed as exclusive, but many leading companies are working toward greater inclusion across race, gender, body diversity, and ability. We are excited to contribute to that movement through accessibility, mentorship, and healthy training practices. As we build this program, we reflect on how we can meaningfully support

Indigenous communities whose ancestral lands we live and create on, here in Nevada County. We hope these studios become places of connection, creativity, mentorship, and shared inspiration throughout our community. We are building something meaningful through collaboration, dedication, and community support. We are deeply grateful for your support of the arts in our public school and greater community.

- **Colton Dennis (He/Him/His)**  
**Merced County Arts Council, Merced County**  
**Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps; California Cultural Districts; State-Local Partnership**  
**RE: Agenda Item 12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dear Chair and Councilmembers. My name is Colton Dennis, executive director of the Merced County Arts Council, a State-Local Partner of the California Arts Council, a member of the Coalition of County Arts Agencies, and a newly designated Cultural District—one of only two in our region.

I wish I could be with you in Nevada County today. However, we are a very small arts council with a lot happening on the ground—arts programs, cultural celebrations, and community events—which, in many ways, is a good problem to have. Your investment has helped create that momentum.

CAC funding supports organizations like ours as well as cultural partners such as the Vatthanatham Lao Foundation, whose Lao New Year celebration is among the largest in the state. Events like this show how arts and culture bring together people of all ages, viewpoints, and backgrounds—from recent immigrants to longtime residents. Our new Cultural District designation, the Downtown Merced Arts & Culture District, has sparked a renewed sense of energy and pride among our culture bearers and local artists, connecting us more deeply and making us stronger as a community.

Your partnership has made a significant difference in Merced County, a historically under-resourced region. I hope you will continue—and deepen—this investment so that our communities can keep growing, creating, and thriving through the arts. And finally—happy 50th birthday to the California Arts Council!

# TAB D

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021

# ARTS & YOUTH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

## Council Presentation

**Josy Miller, Ph.D** | Programs | [josy.miller@arts.ca.gov](mailto:josy.miller@arts.ca.gov)

# ARTS & YOUTH STAFF TEAM

## **Josy Miller**

Arts Program Manager  
she/her

## **Emily Taggart**

Arts Program Specialist  
she/her

## **Marc Cunanan**

## **Chappelle**

Arts Program Specialist  
he/him



# AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. Background: CAC Arts & Youth Programs
2. Context: Current state support for arts & youth engagement
3. Next Steps: Outstanding questions & research approach
4. AAY Grantee Presentation: Tandy Beal & Company

# Background

## CAC Arts & Youth Programs

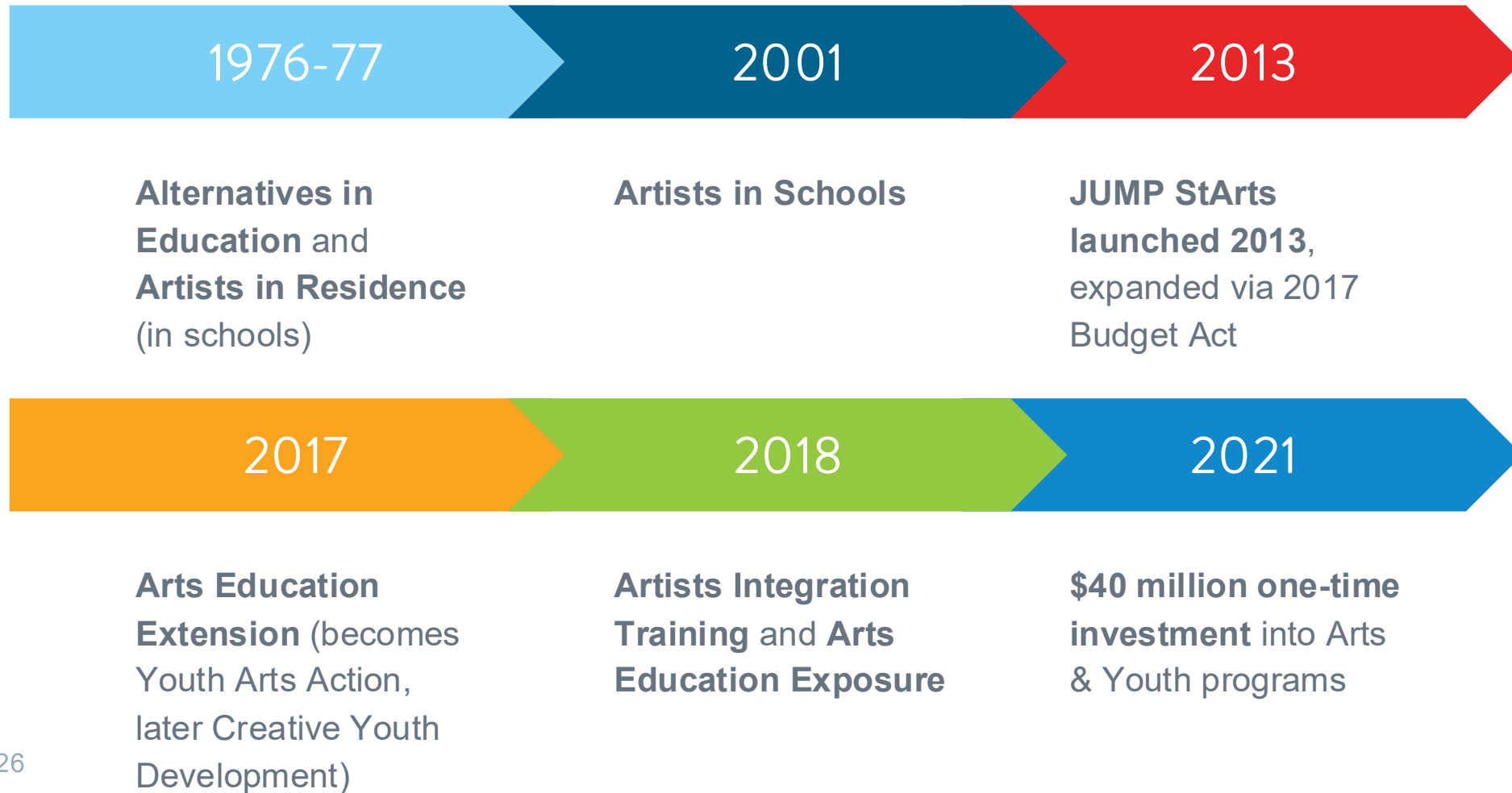




*As our world becomes more hectic and mechanized, the arts are an inexhaustible source of inspiration and fulfillment for the human spirit... The arts are no more a frill than spelling.*

—Dr. Wilson Riles,  
CA Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1978

# BACKGROUND



# LEGACY PROGRAMS

## (PRE-2025 CONSOLIDATION)

### **AIS: Artists in Schools**

In-school, standards-based arts learning via community arts partners (PreK–12)

### **AIT: Arts Integration Training**

Professional development in arts integration for teachers/administrators

### **CYD: Creative Youth Development**

Out-of-school programming for youth (0–24) across community settings

### **EXP: Arts Education Exposure**

Field trips/assemblies for high-quality arts engagement

### **JMP: JUMP StArts**

High-quality arts education for system-impacted youth.

# **CONTEXT**

Current State Support for Arts &  
Youth Engagement



# State Support for Arts Education

## California Dept. of Education

- Education Code
- Prop. 28

## California Arts Council Grants

- Teaching Artists Involvement
- Community Arts Programming
- Afterschool Programs
- Professional Development for Educators & Administrators



# California Education Code

## Arts education is a requirement for all public school students

- Grades 1 to 6 “shall receive instruction”
- Grades 7-12 “shall have access to courses” in visual and performing arts
- All high school graduates must have one year of visual and performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education

~11% of California schools are in compliance

## Key Challenges

- Insufficient funding
- Lack of training for educators and administrators



# Prop 28: Arts and Music in Schools Act

## 2022 voter initiative that sets aside \$1B annually for arts education

- Supplement, not supplant arts instruction in schools
- 80/20 rule for Local education agencies (LEAs) with 500 or more students
  - 80% for certified or classified arts instructors
  - 20% training, supplies, partnerships
  - Up to 1% on administrative expenses
- Local control

## Key Challenges

- Credentialed teacher shortage
- Lack of impact data from mandatory audits
- Inconsistent understanding and implementation of AMS policy



# ARTS & YOUTH CONSOLIDATION (2025)

- Single umbrella program simplifies applicant experience
- Aligns five historic program types under one grant
- 2026 cycle includes a \$5M cap — analysis underway on impacts

# GRANTS AWARDED (2018-25)

	AIS	AIT	CYD	EXP	JMP	AAV	<u>Total</u>
2018-24	684	108	1062	367	287	N/A	<u>2508</u>
2018-24 Average*	171	27	266	73	72	N/A	<u>608</u>
2025	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	215	<u>215</u>

\*Averages are rounded and represent 2018-24 total divided by the 4 grant cycles that occurred during this timeframe.

# GRANT AMOUNT AWARDED (2018-25)

	AIS	AIT	CYD	EXP	JMP	AAV	Total
2018-24	\$16,951,623	\$1,036,899	\$26,037,442	\$13,986,595	\$14,076,813	N/A	<u>\$76,165,999</u>
2018-24 Average*	\$4,237,906	\$259,225	\$6,509,361	\$3,496,649	\$3,519,203	N/A	<u>\$18,022,343</u>
2025	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$4,076,627	<u>\$4,076,627</u>

\*Averages are rounded and represent 2018-24 total divided by the 4 grant cycles that occurred during this timeframe.

# Regional Trends\*

<b>Region</b>	<b>2025 (AAY)</b>	<b>2024 (CYD, EXP, AIT)</b>	<b>2022 (CYD, EXP, AIT, AIS)</b>
Bay Area – Other	22%	21%	22%
Bay Area – San Francisco	10%	15%	13%
Capital	3%	6%	5%
Central Coast	6%	6%	8%
Central Valley	5%	5%	3%
Far South	11%	10%	11%
Inland Empire	6%	2%	3%
South – Los Angeles & Orange	32%	32%	32%
Upstate	6%	3%	4%

\*awarded grants

# Total Revenue Trends\*

	<b>2025 (AAY)</b>	<b>2024 (CYD, EXP, AIT)</b>	<b>2022 (CYD, EXP, AIT, AIS)</b>
<b>Total Awarded</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>883</b>
TR >\$5M	11%	12%	11%
TR \$1M-\$4.9M	23%	25%	22%
TR \$500K-\$999K	20%	19%	17%
TR \$100K-\$499K	34%	39%	35%
TR \$0-\$99K	12%	6%	14%

\*awarded grants

# AAJ-25 FUNDED PROJECT TYPES

	EXP	AIT	CYD	AIS	<u>Totals</u>
EXP	21	1	1	4	<u>27</u>
AIT	1	7	0	2	<u>10</u>
CYD			123	26	<u>149</u>
AIS				29	<u>29</u>

# AAY-25 IN-SCHOOL VS. AFTER-SCHOOL

# of Projects		# of Projects*		# of Projects	
EXP	24.5				
AIT	9	In-school	78.5	Serving system-impacted youth	19
CYD	136.5				
AIS	45	After-school	136.5		

\*projects that occurred in both places count as 0.5/0.5.

# NEXT STEPS

Outstanding Questions & Research  
Approach



# GOING FORWARD

1. How has CAC support changed longitudinally across program types?
2. What recommendations best align CAC funding with statewide needs?

## Research Approach:

- AAY-25 Scope-of-Work Analysis
- Stakeholder feedback
- Impact Assessment of \$5M Revenue Cap



*I am convinced that the arts and excellence in education are inextricably interlocked and that we must have arts in our schools because the arts are basic and not a frill... The theatre can teach history; dance can teach social science; photography can teach science and mathematics... I am simply suggesting that the arts can be a powerful vehicle by which we teach far beyond the beauty of art itself.*

—Ernest Boyer, US Commissioner of Education, 1978

# Resources

- [Prop 28: Arts & Music in Schools Planning Toolkit \(CreateCA\)](#)
- [California Arts Education Landscape 2025 \(SRI Education\)](#)
- [Proposition 28 – Arts and Music Schools Funding \(California Department of Education\)](#)
- [An Unfinished Canvas: Arts Education in California, Taking Stock of Policies and Practices \(SRI International\)](#)

# Tandy Beal & Company

Arts & Youth Grantee





# QUESTIONS



# THANK YOU

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



[facebook.com/californiaartscouncil](https://facebook.com/californiaartscouncil)



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# TAB E

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021

# CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

## Individual Artist Fellowship

**Josy Miller, Ph.D** | Arts Programs Manager | [josy.miller@arts.ca.gov](mailto:josy.miller@arts.ca.gov)

6/18/2026



# HELLO

## **Josy Miller**

Arts Program Manager  
she/her

## **Gabrielle Rosado**

Arts Program Specialist  
she/her



# AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. Background & Purpose
2. Assessing Aesthetic Excellence
3. History of CAC Fellowship Program
4. Administering Organizations & Regional Approach
5. Program Update from Central Coast AO

# Background & Purpose

The Individual Artists Fellowship (IAF) program uplifts and celebrates California artists across all disciplines and traditions, highlights their excellence, and acknowledges their leadership in shaping traditional and contemporary cultures.

Awards are made in the following tiers:

**Emerging Artist  
Fellows**

**\$5,000**

**Established Artist  
Fellows**

**\$10,000**

**Legacy Artist  
Fellows**

**\$50,000**

For this grant, excellence is defined by:

- A unique artistic vision
- A sustained commitment to creative practice
- Engagement with and impact on the cultural ecosystem

# Assessing Aesthetic Excellence

## The Aesthetic Attributes



**Commitment** - Creative processes and products embody conviction to the cause espoused through the work.



**Risk-taking** - The creative work assumes risk by subverting dominant norms, values, narratives, standards, or aesthetics.



**Communal Meaning** - The creative work facilitates collective meaning that transcends individual perspective and experience.



**Openness** - The creative work deepens impact by remaining open, fluid, transparent, subject to influence, and able to hold contradiction.



**Disruption** - Art challenges what is by exposing what has been hidden, posing new ways of being, and modeling new forms of action.



**Resourcefulness** - Imaginative use of available resources drives artistic innovation and demonstrates responsible social and environmental practice.



**Cultural Integrity** - The creative work demonstrates integrity and ethical use of material with specific cultural origins and context.



**Coherence** - Strong ideas expressed with clarity advance both artistic and social purposes.



**Emotional Experience** - Arts for Change facilitates a productive movement between "heart space"—the emotional experience that art evokes—and the "head space" of civic or social issues.



**Stickiness** - The creative work achieves sustained resonance, impact, or value.



**Sensory Experience** - Vivid sensations deepen the experience of the creative work and heighten the power of its messages and the potential for change.



These aesthetic attributes are described in detail in the section, Aesthetic Attributes Framework.

**Americans for the Arts,  
*Aesthetic Perspectives:  
Attributes of Excellence in  
Arts for Change, 2017***

# History of CAC Fellowship Programs

1987

Original CAC Artists Fellowship Program is Established

2003

Fellowship Program ends due to reduction in state budget allocation

2021

CAC launches the IAF program through a direct funding strategy.  
186 Fellows were awarded.

2023

Four regionally-based AOs are awarded to regrant IAF awards  
261 Fellows were awarded.

2025

Eight regionally-based AOs are awarded to regrant IAF awards  
Applications are currently being adjudicated.

# 2023 Upstate Region: Youth Speaks

## Individual Artists Fellowship

**BETI  
MASENQO**

Youth Speaks x CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

**ESTABLISHED ARTIST  
GRANT RECIPIENT**

Beti Masenqo is an Ethiopian-American indie artist based in Sacramento, CA. An engineer by training, she recently transitioned into working as a full time musician and music student. She derives her stage name from the traditional Ethiopian stringed instrument, the masenqo, and incorporates traditional Ethiopian modes into the folk melodies she writes. Many of her lyrics focus on her identity as a black woman, Ethiopian-American, and immigrant. She plays guitar and violin with her band throughout Sacramento and the Bay Area. She plans on recording and releasing an EP in 2024.

**ANGELA  
HAN**

Youth Speaks x CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

**EMERGING ARTIST  
GRANT RECIPIENT**

Angela Han is a multidisciplinary creator who builds speculative worlds ("Paradises") where women are eternally respected, celebrated, and cherished. In a process she calls "mythmaking," Angela weaves together her research in music, myth, and herstory with reflections of her own lived experiences as a Chinese-American woman to create new narratives that embody her hopes for the future. Her recent projects include "Realms of Courage: Celebrating Asian Women Composers" that amplifies fifteen contemporary composers who identify as Asian women through art inspired by their music, and "八王 Ba Wang (8 Kings)" that highlights the stories of eight women born from Angela's imagination who choose to live against society's standards and become masters of their own fates. To learn more about Angela and her work, visit [@angelahanart](https://www.angelahanart.com) or [www.angelahanart.com](http://www.angelahanart.com)

**BRETT  
COOK**

Youth Speaks x CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

**LEGACY ARTIST  
GRANT RECIPIENT**

Brett Cook is an interdisciplinary artist and educator who uses storytelling as a vehicle to distill complex ideas and creative practices to transform outer and inner worlds of being. Using inquiry-based approaches he designs inclusive processes and products that promote awareness and embody the complexity of loving communities. His objects feature painting, drawing, photography, and elaborate installations to tell pluralistic stories with broad representation. His public projects typically involve community workshops featuring arts-integrated pedagogy and contemplative strategies along with music, performance, and food to create fluid boundaries between art making, daily life and healing. His work is in private and public collections including the Smithsonian/National Portrait Gallery, the Walker Art Center, and the Studio Museum of Harlem. Brett is currently artist in residence at the Exploratorium and a trustee of A Blade of Grass, an arts nonprofit dedicated to social engagement.

# 2023 LA Region: Los Angeles Performance Practice

## California Arts Council Individual Artist Fellowships



2023 Fellowship Awardees - Los Angeles County

# 2023 Central Valley Region: SV Creates



Photo Caption (Copy and paste file name here)

“Our partnerships and collaborative structure for the IAF program resulted in applications from artists in each county in the region. We are thrilled with the geographic and cultural diversity represented by the artists selected as Fellows.”

- Alexandra Urbanowski, Associate Director of SVCREATES

# 2023 South Coast & Inland Empire Region: ArtsOC



**William Camargo** (Established, Orange) - William Camargo is a photo-based artist in Anaheim whose work revolves around Latinx/Chicanx histories and his response to them in his photographic work. They live as interventions and documentation of erased histories in Anaheim, California. Furthermore, his work looks at the struggles of labor, gentrification, and police violence in southern California. (Photo by Ken Gonzales-Day)



**T. Faye Griffin** (Emerging, San Bernardino) - T. Faye Griffin is an emerging visual artist and activist based in Apple Valley. "The objective of my work is to advocate for the good, call out



**Victor Payan** (Established, Orange) - Victor Payan is an award-winning writer, interdisciplinary artist, curator and arts administrator who organizes public events and artistic interventions that promote tolerance, understanding and community empowerment. He is Founder/Director of Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA) and his projects include Dreamocracy in America, Aztec Gold with Lou Chalibre and Keep on Crossin'. (Photo by Pocha Peña)



**Ulises Rodriguez** (Emerging, Riverside) - Ulises Rodriguez is a Mexican born artist who migrated to the US in the year 2000. "I am a music composer, poet, and performer," he said. "Through my artistic career, I've studied, taught, and represented my community, both nationally and internationally. Focusing on influences of Son Jarocho and Afro Latin rhythms, I use my art to create safe spaces, supporting our youth and communities." (Photo by Romulo Landin Casillas)



**Tula Strong** (Emerging, San Bernardino) - Tula B. Strong is a Liberian-American performance artist working with the disciplines of dance, storytelling, and Traditional American Folk Music. She creates multidisciplinary performances that center the everyday & spiritual experiences of Black people globally. Most importantly, Tula is passionate about creating art that is accessible to diverse ethnic & socio-economic audiences. (Photo by Marcus Brown, Jr.)



**Terrell Sledge** (Established, San Diego) - Terrell Sledge is a multi-disciplined creator of responsible art and expressions that re-imagine culture and social perspectives. He harnesses empathy, understanding and social integrity through performance, literature, graphic storytelling and multi-sensory immersive art experiences. Terrell draws upon his background in expressive arts, community advocacy, leadership coaching, writing and education.



**Stephanie Dorian Smith** (Established, Orange) - Stephanie



# Arts Council Santa Cruz County

Central Coast's IAF Administering Organization



# 2026-27 INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS FELLOWSHIP

## Central Coast Region

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Arts Council Santa Cruz County is excited to administer the California Arts Council's Individual Artists Fellowship (IAF) for the Central Coast, in collaboration with our regional partners.



# Central Coast Partners



**ARTS  
COUNCIL**  
SANTA  
CRUZ  
COUNTY



# Outreach & Application Support

Samantha Bounkeua, 2023 Emerging Artist Fellow.  
Photo by Ruth Christophersen.

- 377 applications (250 expected)
- Guidelines listed directly on [our IAF webpage](#)
- [Application Toolkit](#)
- Outreach through county partners & contracted “Ambassadors”
- Heavy social media presence across the region featuring previous grantees ([example here](#)).
- 145 attendees at info sessions; each county also held Zoom office hours.



# Program Design

Adela Najarro, 2023 Established Artist Fellow, with Aideed Medina at the Círculo de Poetas y Writers annual conference

- Streamlined Application:
  - 4-5 brief narrative responses
  - Work samples, resume, letter of support
- Panel Process:
  - 66 panelist applications primarily from artists, including many IAF applicants
  - 6 diverse panels: 5 panelists each reviewing 60-67 applications
  - Panel meetings



# Questions?

**Tamara Liu**

Grants Program Manager  
Arts Council Santa Cruz County

**831.226.1174**

**[tamara@artscouncilsc.org](mailto:tamara@artscouncilsc.org)**

**2026-27**  
**INDIVIDUAL**  
**ARTISTS**  
**FELLOWSHIP**



# Individual Artist Fellow Alumna

Adela Najarro





# QUESTIONS



# THANK YOU

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# TAB F

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021



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](http://www.arts.ca.gov)

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**DATE:** June 26, 2026  
**TO:** Council Members  
**FROM:** Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager  
**RE:** Overview of General Operating Support, Statewide and Regional Networks and Cultural Pathways Programs Consolidation

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In January 2025, the Council voted on a slate of programs that consolidated the Statewide & Regional Network program (SRNs) and the Cultural Pathways (CP) program into a single General Operating Support grant to serve all California arts and culture nonprofits. The decision to consolidate was based on current strategic framework priorities to consolidate programs in order to focus on small organizations and individual artists, and leverage State-Local Partners for local support. Through FY25-26 and the current launch of the FY26-27 grant cycle, Council and the agency received 50 public comments about the proposed consolidation and its potential (or perceived) impact on the field. At the September and October 2025 Council meetings, Council requested a more in-depth evaluation of the impact of the general operating consolidation to determine the potential negative and positive consequences of this policy.

To better understand the impact of program policy decisions, it is important to describe and understand the larger system in which CAC programs and grantees operate. This memo and presentation focus on the broader context of SRN and CP organizations engagement and provides select historical data on SRN and CP grantees in relation to General Operating Support grants. Looking at the context of how these organizations operate in conjunction with CAC's history of support will hopefully provide meaningful information for Council to consider.

Research questions driving this preliminary investigation:

- How has CAC supported SRNs, CPs and General Operating Support grants historically?
- What are the tradeoffs in consolidation of SRN and CP programs into a generic General Operating Support program?

Research investigations often generate additional questions and avenues of inquiry, as new information leads to new questions and opportunity for learning. Such is the case with this initial research on CAC's General Operating Support around specific types of organizations. Further inquiries throughout the upcoming strategic planning process and grantee engagements will contribute to a deeper understanding of the roles and support for California's arts and culture infrastructure.

To follow is a high-level summary of key themes unearthed during this ongoing research.

## **KEY THEMES**

- 1. CAC's grantmaking programs touch multiple segments of the arts and culture ecosystem, including direct service providers, educators, support systems and collaboratives.**

Stepping back from the immediacy of the recent program policy decisions around consolidation helps to gain perspective on the potential impacts of the decision and the subsequent configuration of programs and populations served.

The arts and culture sector that CAC currently touches consists of:

- Producing/Presenting organizations directly create and present artistic and cultural experiences, provide arts education programming and other public events typically for a general or specific audience. This also includes nonprofits whose core programs include non-arts activities along with arts-specific activities (e.g., a social service provider that produces arts programs for the benefits of its clients, such as arts therapy).
- Art service organizations provide a range of supports for artists and organizations typically centered around a location, culture, population or artistic practice. Services include training, marketing and communications, advocacy, sometimes grant opportunities, field research and peer learning.
- Local arts agencies are government or government-affiliated entities that serve as the county arts provider. The SLPs are CAC's local arts agency partners. In other contexts, arts service organizations can mirror and/or magnify the work of a local arts agency.

- Artists/Creative Workers are individuals who create, produce, perform, present, exhibit and teach arts, cultural practice and other creative pursuits.
- Place-based collectives are an organized group of nonprofits, government and business within a specific local area focused on place-making and community development through the arts (e.g., cultural districts).

Other collaborators include public agencies who fund arts and arts-adjacent activities; private arts philanthropy, both foundations and individual donors; and specific dedicated educational institutions that provide pathways into creative careers; for-profit venues and festivals that provide space and opportunity for artists to showcase their work.

This is not an exhaustive list and description of all the components of the arts and culture system but gives a high-level view of the key parts that touch CAC's grantmaking portfolios.

**2. Although CAC has always invested in under-resourced organizations and organizational support systems the agency only introduced an “all-purpose” general operating support program in 2020.**

CAC's grant history is rich and varied. Some years have included up to 18 programs, and some programs have had breaks on and off throughout the years, where many have evolved over time as Council and field priorities and interests changed. Programs fall into at least one of several categories:

- General Operating Support funding, or unrestricted funding to support operational development that could be used for projects or administrative or other expenses.
- Project funding to support artistic endeavors and disciplines, or for specific communities.
- Arts education/youth to ensure access to arts and culture for youth in a variety of settings (in-school, within-system, outside school, etc.).
- Capacity building or technical assistance funding for individuals and organizations through which dedicated training was provided or funds utilized for consultants/training.
- Individual artist support either through direct grantmaking or intermediary programs.
- Place-based grants to inspire in arts and culture activation of a neighborhood, community, region.

- Infrastructure development grants that provide support for art services organizations, local arts agencies (e.g., State-Local partnerships), and other organizations that provide services to the field.

Throughout, equity, access and community have grown as core principles driving program design and implementation. For example, programs such as Multi-Cultural Arts Development grants (various; 1980's to early 2000's), and the Rural and Inner-City Presenting Pilot Program (1999-2001) evolved into the Cultural Pathways pilot in 2015, all focusing on diverse and under-served artists, organizations and communities. Related programs and policies such as Folk and Traditional arts and focus on small budget, first time and low HPI community-centered applications underscore the continued commitment to accessibility, community and equity.

In addition, CAC has always taken an interest in bolstering the sector's infrastructure through operational grants, professional development and capacity building grants. The early introduction of statewide art service organization into the programmatic mix recognized the need to support networks for greater information and service sharing for the field. This investment continued from the 1980s into the Infrastructure Support Program in the early 2000's, and finally the Statewide Service Networks and Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) in 2005.

A priority of the current Strategic Framework, CAC re-introduced a generic General Operating Support grant in 2020. At the time, Council was concerned with the impact of the pandemic on arts and culture organizations and artists, especially in communities with limited cultural infrastructure and low socio-economic stability. Virtual listening sessions conducted that summer (July 2020) described the pervasive and intense need for general operational support from across the state. In the field at large, foundations and funding agencies were working collaboratively with grantees to ease restrictions on use of grant funds into more general operating support to survive through the crisis. The philanthropic sector was trying to respond to the urgent need for general and flexible financial support arts organizations required. Since then, CAC introduced three iterations of a general operating grant, prioritizing small organizations:

- Relief for Individual Artists and Cultural Practitioners (regranting program; 2021)
  - *"Support to a single partner organization to administer unrestricted rapid relief funding for artists and cultural practitioners facing dire economic consequences due to the COVID-19 on behalf of the CAC."*<sup>1</sup>
- Arts and Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief (2021-2024)

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<sup>1</sup> CAC Press Release, July 2020, <https://arts.ca.gov/press-release/announcing-the-california-relief-fund-for-artists-and-cultural-practitioners/>.

- *"Operational relief funding for arts and cultural organizations who have experienced economic hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic, prioritizing small organizations."*<sup>2</sup>
- General Operating Support (2025-present)
  - Priorities include small budget organizations (total operating revenue <\$250,000), first-time grantees, and those serving low HPI (Healthy Places Index) communities.

General Operating Support is now standard practice by State Arts Agencies in the country. In Fiscal Year 2023, 31% of all state arts agency grant dollars nationally went to General Operating Support, and many are transitioning to multi-year grants to reduce burden on applicants and increase stability.

### **3. The Statewide and Regional Network (SRN) grant program attracted a broad spectrum of network-based organizations.**

Between 2022 and 2024, the SRN grantee cohorts shifted from year to year, with a moderate base of 25 organizations receiving grants all three years out of 101 organizations. In this same time period, SRNs accounted for between 8% and 11% of total Local Support funds, excluding special funding for California Creative Corps and Creative Youth Fund investments in 2022. The number of SRNs varies within this same period – from 72 in 2022 to 62 in 2024, the last year of the program to date. The average and maximum grant amounts also increased over time from approximately \$18,000 in 2017 to \$49,000 in 2022 and \$35,000 in 2024. Looking back further in the history of the program, the SRN allocation ranged between 4% and 25% of total Local Assistance funds between 2005 and 2019. The number of SRNs was as few as six in 2006 and as many as 82 in 2021.

SRNs, and even historically statewide art service organization grantees, are not monoliths. A review of SRN grantee missions and core program descriptions revealed the following types of network organizations (categories not mutually exclusive):

1. Artist Service and Infrastructure Organizations (~25-30%): Organizations that primarily support other artists and arts organizations through fiscal sponsorship, professional development, networking, and capacity building.

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<sup>2</sup> CAC Press Release and program description, December 2020, [https://arts.ca.gov/grant\\_program/arts-cultural-organizations-general-operating-support/](https://arts.ca.gov/grant_program/arts-cultural-organizations-general-operating-support/).

- *Examples:* Arts Area, Intersection for the Arts, Fulcrum Arts, InterMusic SF, Emerging Arts Professionals, California Lawyers for the Arts
2. Arts Education and Youth Development (~20-25%): Organizations focused on providing arts instruction and creative learning experiences to young people, often in schools or underserved communities.
    - *Examples:* Education Through Music-LA, Young Audiences of Northern California, ETM-LA, Turnaround Arts California, Luna Kids Dance, California Poets in the Schools
  3. Discipline-Specific Networks and Advocacy (~15-20%): Membership organizations that unite practitioners within specific art forms to advocate, share resources, and advance their field.
    - *Examples:* Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Dancers' Group, Theatre Bay Area, Choral Consortium of San Diego, Dance Resource Center, Women's Audio Mission, Women in Animation
  4. Cultural Identity and Community-Based Arts (~15-20%): Organizations centering specific cultural communities, often BIPOC-led, preserving cultural traditions and amplifying marginalized voices.
    - *Examples:* California Indian Basketweavers Association, Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center, Barcid Foundation, Latino Arts Network, Korean American Artist Collective, Peacock Rebellion, World Arts West
  5. Statewide Advocacy and Policy Organizations (~5-10%): Organizations working at systems level on arts policy, funding advocacy, and field-wide initiatives.
    - *Examples:* Californians for the Arts, Create CA, California Humanities, Arts for LA
  6. Presenting & Production Organizations (~10-15%): Organizations primarily focused on producing performances, festivals, exhibitions, or publications.
    - *Examples:* Film Independent, San Francisco Film Society, Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Performance Practice, Catamaran Literary Reader, Poetry Flash
  7. Conservation & Preservation (~2-5%): Organizations focused on preserving cultural heritage, archives, and artistic works.
    - *Examples:* Balboa Art Conservation Center, California Association of Museums

8. Social Justice & Equity-Focused Arts (~8-12%): Organizations explicitly using arts as tools for healing, advocacy, and addressing systemic inequities.
  - *Examples*: artEquity, Arts for Healing and Justice Network, Street Symphony, Skid Row Arts Alliance, QCC.

In many ways, the diversity of organizations within SRN cohorts may contribute to general confusion about its purpose apart from other general operating programs. For example, producing and presenting organizations are meant to be served through the all-purpose General Operating Support program and are not defined as service organizations for the broader field. Although changes to the program guidelines in 2024 attempted to clarify the definition of a “network” organization, the diversity of the cohort persists, and therefore the potential confusion in its purpose apart from other general operating support programs.

SRNs also serve as fiscal sponsors for member organizations in other grant programs<sup>3</sup>, apply for and receive project-based grants, and serve as Administering Organizations (regranting organizations) for programs such as Individual Artist Fellowship.

Below highlights the number of SRN/SRN type grants and dollar amounts from 2005 to 2024.

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<sup>3</sup> For example, 14 funded grants were fiscally sponsored by SRNs in 2024, representing 11 SRNs. In 2025, that number increased to 21 successful grants, representing seven SRNs.

Figure 1: Number of Statewide and Regional Network (type) grants, 2005 to 2024

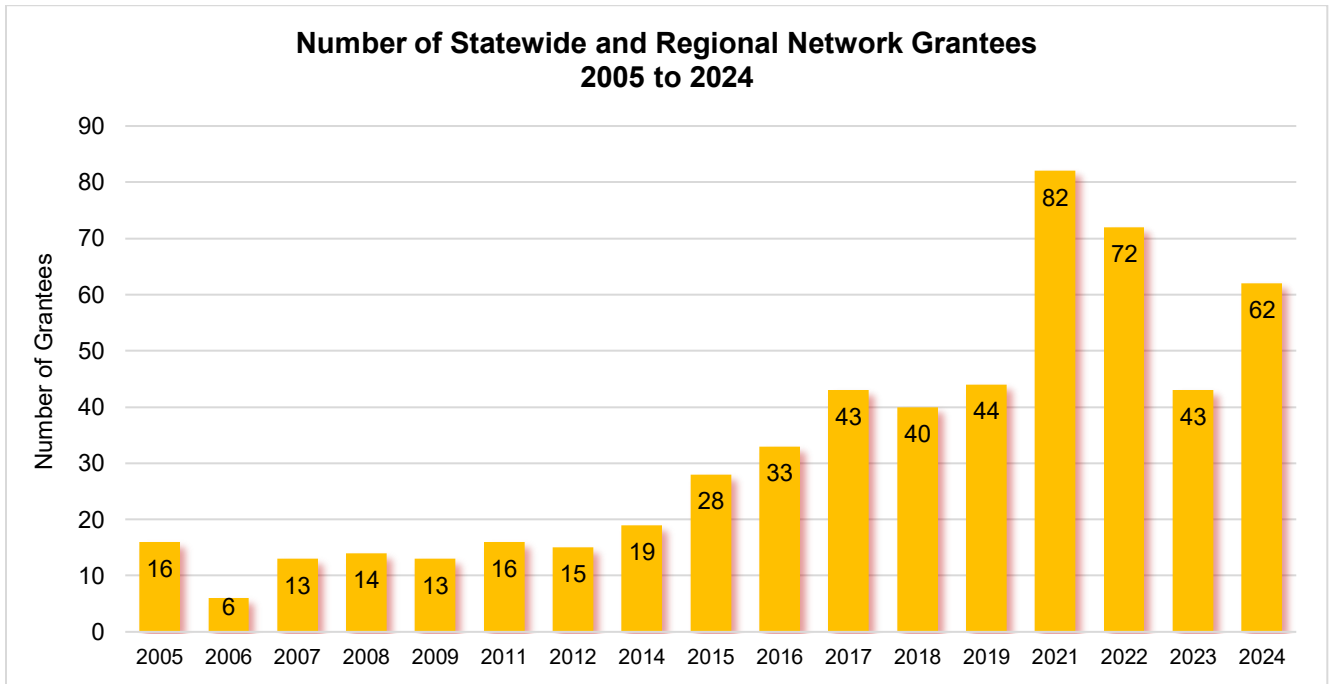
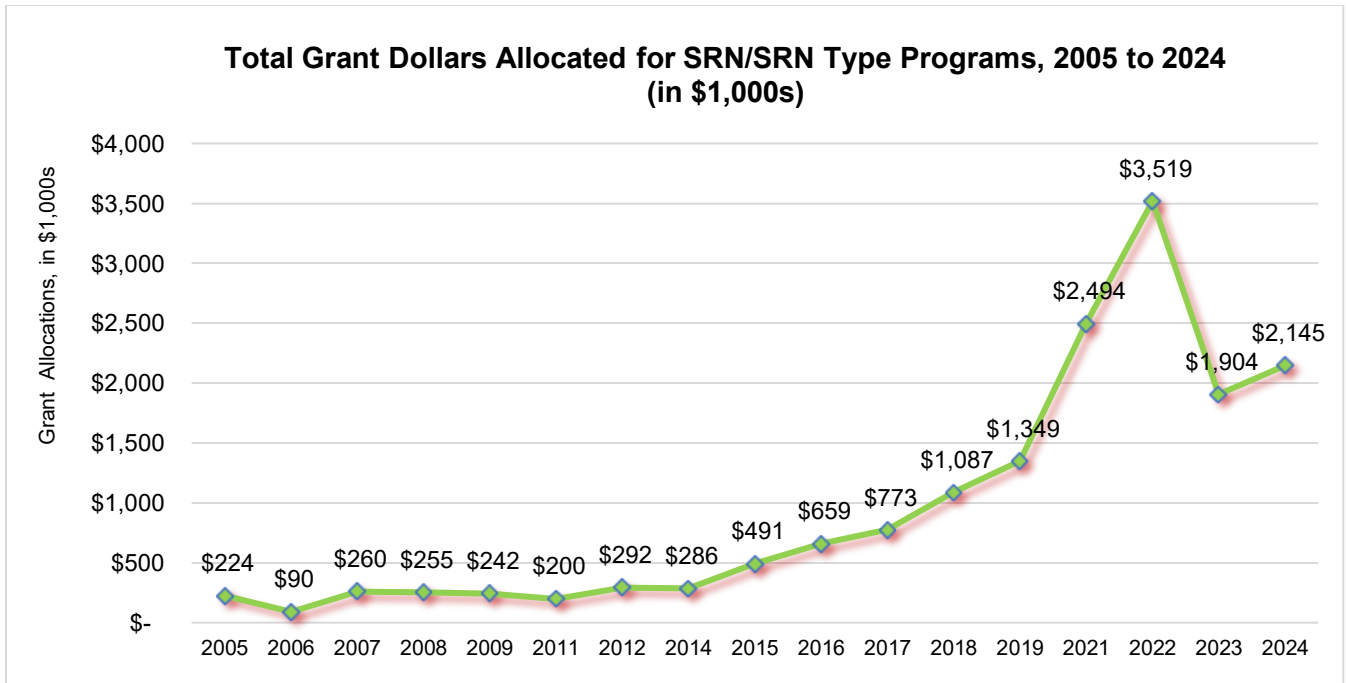


Figure 2: Total Grant Dollars, Statewide and Regional Network (type), 2005 to 2024, in \$1000's



*Table 1: Total Operating Revenue Buckets - Statewide and Regional Network Grantees, 2017 to 2024*

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE LAST FISCAL YEAR REPORTING	2017 (n=43)	2018 (n=41)	2019 (n=44)	2021 (n=81)	2022 (n=72)	2023 (n=43)	2024 (n=62)
Under \$150,000	26%	27%	27%	31%	28%	7%	18%
\$150,000 to \$250,000	7%	7%	11%	9%	3%	14%	16%
\$250,000 to \$500,000	21%	20%	18%	17%	22%	12%	11%
\$500,000 to \$1M	19%	17%	11%	16%	17%	16%	13%
\$1M to \$1.5M	7%	5%	9%	10%	11%	14%	13%
\$1.5M to \$3M	16%	17%	14%	5%	4%	19%	18%
\$3M to \$5M	5%	5%	7%	6%	7%	9%	11%
\$5M to \$10M	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%
\$10M+	0%	2%	2%	4%	4%	7%	0%

**4. The Cultural Pathways program was unique in that it included a companion grant for technical assistance (TA) to serve each grantee cohort.**

CAC has provided directed TA and capacity grants in the past. However, it was uncommon for TA to be dedicated to a specific cohort of grantees until Cultural Pathways pilot in 2015. The first three cohorts' TA provider was Alliance for Cultural and Traditional Arts (ACTA), CAC's current Folk and Traditional Arts Administering Organization. The final 2022 cohort was served by World Trust Educational Services, Inc. TA included in-person convenings, virtual webinars, peer-learning opportunities, travel stipends, templates and individual coaching. All TA was grounded in cultural responsiveness, peer-learning, geographic accessibility (grantees were located across the state), and reinforcement of learning.

Final reports indicate an ongoing unmet need across CP grantees, even after two years (e.g., financial opportunities, administrative skills, governance, and staffing). In many ways, the CP program was a launching pad for them to continue to grow and develop their operational stability and expand program and opportunities.

The TA component of the program provided support above and beyond grant dollars. Even if CP grantees are funded through the current General Operating Support grant program, they are not receiving the same level of TA support, and therefore it isn't equivalent experience or benefit.

Figure 3: Number of Cultural Pathway Grantees, 2015 to 2022 (Two-Year Grants)

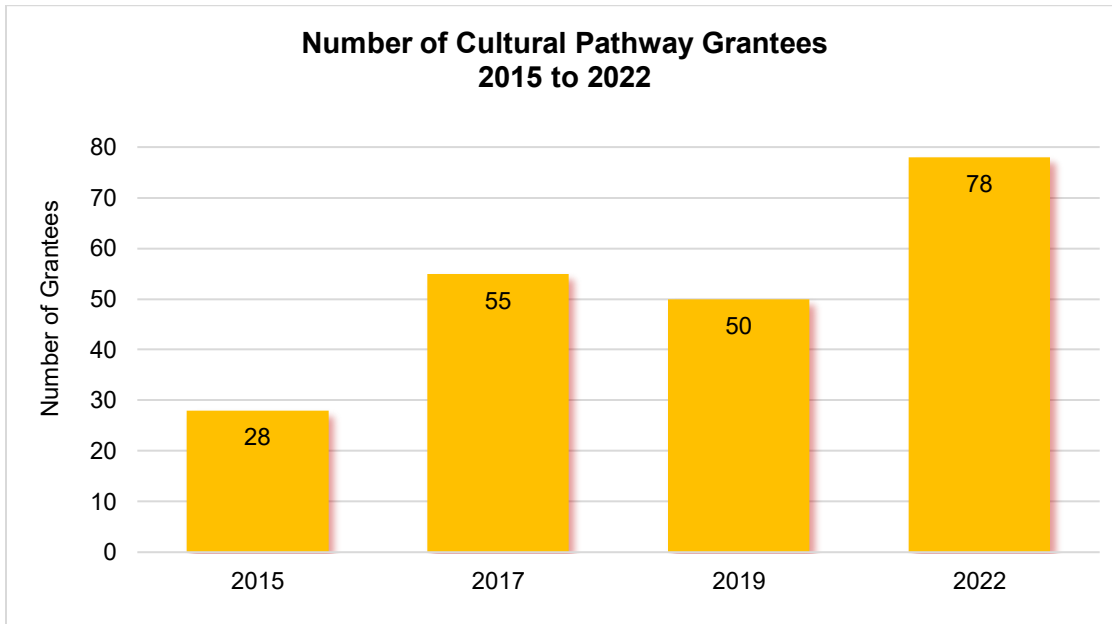
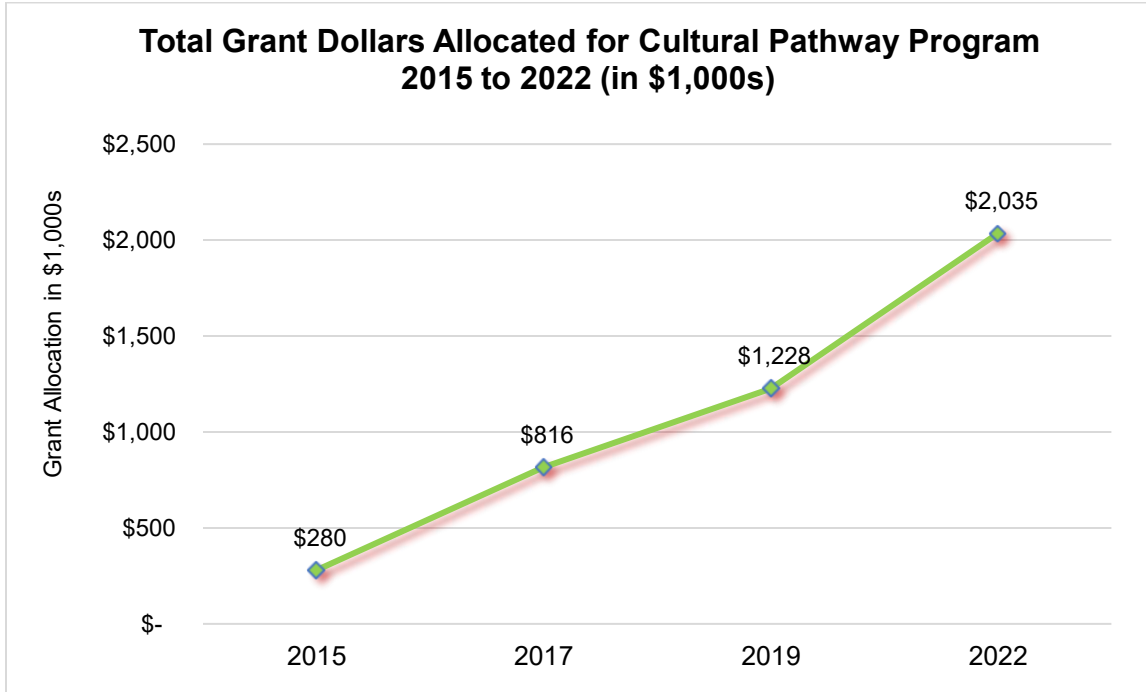


Figure 4: Total Grant Allocations for Cultural Pathways Program, 2015 to 2022 (note: this is a two-year grant period)



*Table 2: Cultural Pathways Technical Assistance Provider and Grant Amounts, 2016 to 2022*

Cultural Pathways Technical Assistance		
Year	TA Provider/Grantee	Grant Amount
2016	Alliance for California Traditional Arts	\$175,423
2019	Alliance for California Traditional Arts	\$175,000
2022	World Trust Educational Services, Inc.	\$150,000

**5. Without specific attention, the current General Operating Support grant program serves fewer art service networks and fewer past cultural pathways organizations.**

To be expected, without a dedicated funding program, the number of SRN and CP grantee organizations decreased between 2024 and 2025 within the General Operating Support framework. Overall, FY2025 was a difficult year for General Operating Support, with only 236 out of 1,316 eligible applicants funded (17%). Both groups of applicants – SRN and CP organizations – fared relatively well in terms of their final rank scores, but to be a successful FY2025 General Operating Support grantee, one had to receive a minimum ranking of 5.5 out of 6. It was highly competitive, and the final allocations determinations slightly favored project-based grants.

Below are summary tables on the changes, describing the number of former CP and SRN grantee organizations who were funded as part of the 2025 program offerings comparatively.

Only five of the 29 former Cultural Pathways grantees who applied to the FY2025 General Operating Support program received a grant (17%), with an average grant amount of \$15,300. By comparison, the FY2022 Cultural Pathways cohort consisted of 78 organizations out of 83 original applicants (94%), with an average grant amount of the \$26,087.

Similarly, 18 out of the 51 FY2024 SRNs who applied to the FY2025 General Operating Support program received a grant (35%). Fiscal Year 2024 SRN program attracted 73 applicants and awarded 62 grants (85% success rate). The average grant for general operating for SRNs decreased significantly from \$34,600 in 2024 to \$15,650 in FY2025 General Operating Support.

*Table 3: Cultural Pathway Grantee Comparison – 2022 vs. 2025 General Operating Support*

	FY2025 General Operating Support	FY2022 Cultural Pathways Program
Average grant amount	\$ 15,300	\$ 26,087
Number of CP grantees	5	78
Number of CP applicants	29	83
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 21,000	\$ 30,000

*Table 4: Statewide and Regional Network Grantee Comparison– 2024 vs. 2025 General Operating Support*

	FY2025 General Operating Support	FY2024 SRN
SRN average grant amount	\$ 15,650	\$ 34,600
Number of SRN grantees	18	62
Number of SRN applicants	51	73
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 22,200	\$ 46,293

Both Cultural Pathways and SRN grantees did apply for and receive grants in other project-based programs. Below describes the number of grants for each organization type for FY2025.

Cultural Pathways organizations received five grants each in Arts and Youth and Impact Projects, and SRN organizations received a total of 16 grants across Arts and Youth, Impact Projects and Individual Artist Fellowship (regranting program).

*Table 5: Cultural Pathways Grantees - FY2025 Project-based grants*

	Arts and Youth	Impact Projects
Average grant amount	\$ 19,800	\$ 18,331
Number of CP grantees	5	5
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 22,200	\$ 21,000

*Table 6: Statewide and Regional Network Grantees - FY2025 Project based grants*

	Arts and Youth	Impact Projects	Individual Artists Fellowship
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SRN average grant amount	\$ 18,482	\$ 18,893	\$ 850,000
Number	7	7	2
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 20,000	\$ 21,250	\$ 700,000

**Reflections and Next Steps**

The goal for this initial investigation is to set up a more continuous and expansive review of CAC’s programs and policies from the past to the present and build knowledge base for the current field on the activities and impact of CAC’s work. In addition, this research generated additional questions about the role of networks in general in strengthening the overall ecosystem, and the role of CAC in supporting those networks beyond the State-Local Partners.

This is an opportune time to start this work as it will coincide with the launch of CAC’s next strategic planning process. Strategic planning requires reflection and consideration of the past, and opportunities for the future. This is just the beginning of the work.

Whether or not the 2025 General Operating Support consolidation weakens the overall health of the arts and culture ecosystem is difficult to gauge without a definition and measurement of what makes the system healthy. CAC’s support of these types of organizations has decreased, and that inherently causes strain on organizations who have received ongoing funding over the years, which is the case with many SRNs.

The lingering question for the Council as strategic planning begins is where should CAC invest to best serve the health of the arts and culture ecosystem of California?

RESEARCH MEMO – JUNE 26, 2026 ADDENDUM

PUBLIC COMMENT ON GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT CONSOLIDATION – DECEMBER 2024 AND JANUARY 2025

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
December 13, 2024	Sarah Weber, ED Association of CA Symphony Orchestras	Los Angeles	yes	Erasing the SRN grant as a distinct program diminishes the value that service organizations play in the arts ecosystem. It forces us into competition with our own constituents, which will be harmful to smaller and lesser-resourced arts organizations. It will be difficult for grant reviewers to fairly assess the merit of applications of art service organizations versus direct arts organizations, as we have very different roles and operations. I strongly urge the Council to keep the SRN as a distinct grant program and to engage with us in dialogue to understand our role and to view us as a partner and ally. Just six months ago, for example, we mobilized our constituents to advocate for the preservation of the CAC budget, exemplifying the power of our service organizations to build networks.
	Jennifer Caballero, Executive Director, California Association of Museums (CAM)	Los Angeles	yes	As a service organization, CAM’s bylaws and policies were carefully written so that our actions do not bring harm to, or create any potential for negative outcomes for, the organizations and individuals that we serve. CAC’s moving of SRN eligibility for grants into a generic category means that we would effectively have to compete with our own institutional members for the same pool of grant funding. This is out of alignment with our intended objectives to serve our constituency. As a current recipient of the Statewide and Regional Networks grant funding, CAM has used these funds to strengthen this field in our state—to ensure that California museums will be able to move forward under conditions of equity, access, transparency, and longterm value. This funding has allowed CAM to expand the geographic reach of CAC funds. I hope you will continue this grant program as a distinct and essential service to California and our museums.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Julie Baker, CEO, Californians for the Arts	Sacramento	yes	The current SRN program is for general operating support already, but there are specific criteria to be able to apply. We feel this is critical to maintain. This proposal would also put service organizations, as others have said, in direct competition with the folks we serve. When you make changes to programs almost every year, it creates instability. Consistency is what the field is looking for.
	Bob Lehman, Vice Chair, San Diego Arts and Culture Commission	San Diego	yes	I'm the Vice Chair of the San Diego Arts and Culture Commission and here today as the Executive Director of the San Diego Museum Council, serving more than 100 museums and cultural sites in our region— from Oceanside in the north to Tijuana in the south. Thanks to SRN funding, we've been able to increase access to communities in our region by working collaboratively with our members. This collaborative model allows funding to go further, helping museums of all sizes share resources, gain visibility, and enhance programming. It also creates advocacy power, providing a unified voice with greater community impact. Our museums in San Diego County are thriving. Nearly all of them are back at prepandemic numbers, some even breaking attendance records. This contrasts with national trends, where only 55% of museums have returned to pre-COVID levels. Through SRN funding, we intentionally provide free services to museums in underserved and underrepresented communities, such as the Barona Cultural Center, the Chicano Park Museum, and the African American Museum of Fine Art. I urge you to keep the SRN program as its own independent category. Prioritizing networks for funding sustains the organizations we serve and helps us continue expanding access statewide. Thank you."

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Aqib Rahman, Arts for LA	Los Angeles	yes	We recognize the importance of your efforts to streamline grant programs and remove barriers for smaller organizations without dedicated development teams. However, we do not support consolidating vastly different programs under general operating support. This change risks creating competition between service organizations and the constituents they serve. Even the committee acknowledges that such consolidation could lead to a loss of distinct funding, disproportionately harming small organizations and programs like Jumpstart and Creative Youth Development. The lack of consistent support for service organizations is deeply disheartening, especially given the strong advocacy SRNs provided last year to preserve CAC funding. If this recommendation moves forward, the vital role SRNs play in the arts ecosystem will be further undervalued. We urge you to preserve the SRN program and allow our coalition of over 30 SRNs to present recommendations that prevent this situation from recurring.
	Sarah Guerrero, Founding Artistic Director, Breath of Fire Latina Theater Ensemble	Orange	no	Storytelling requires specificity, and the more specific we are, the more universal our stories become. Consolidating grant programs threatens this specificity and, in turn, diminishes the universality and impact of our work.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Ricky Abilez, Arts for LA	Los Angeles	yes	we oppose consolidating programs under general operating support, as this would create unnecessary competition and disproportionately harm small organizations. I've heard from many organizations with budgets under \$400,000 that didn't receive CAC funding this year and are now on the brink of closure. If competition is already high, consolidation would make the situation catastrophic. SRNs explicitly advance the geographic equity goals of the CAC's strategic framework. They train artists, build diverse networks, and educate lawmakers. In Los Angeles, with the 2028 Olympic Games approaching, SRNs will play a critical role in connecting communities to opportunities. Last year, we rallied to protect the SRN program and offered to meet with Council Members to discuss changes. These efforts were ignored in developing this recommendation. We urge you to maintain SRNs as a distinct program and allow our coalition to present our recommendations.
	Sean Fenton, Executive Director, Theatre Bay Area	San Francisco	yes	I'm here on behalf of Theatre Bay Area and a coalition of 31 organizations to voice concerns about dissolving the SRN program. Eliminating SRNs as a distinct program diminishes the critical role service organizations play in the arts ecosystem and forces us to compete for funding with our own constituents.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Meg Hamill (She/Her/Hers) California Poets in the Schools, Sonoma County Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools, Impact Projects, Statewide and Regional Networks	Alameda	yes	I see a clear benefit for more nuanced grant programs that are separated by category. As a Statewide & Regional Network grantee, California Poets in the Schools supports a network of around 100 literary teaching artists, spanning 25 counties. The SRN grants helps us to build our infrastructure and capacity so that we can carefully train and guide these teaching artists to launch and grow their careers in their home counties. In turn, poets who have gone through our training program, gain a viable method of financially supporting themselves, as poets, where they live. In turn, these poets reach nearly 20,000 youth each year in top notch arts education programs, and greatly advance the audience for poetry in California. As California Poets in the Schools celebrates our 60th birthday, we consider ourselves to hold a genuine expertise in this arena of career development for poets. And yet the intricacies of this work are not necessarily flashy or exciting in a grant proposal. I am deeply concerned that the very important, nuanced work of organizations like ours, to the overall health of the arts landscape in California, will be lost in the vast array of different types of organizations applying for one general operating support program.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Nancy Olivares (She/Her/Hers) California Humanities, Los Angeles County Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action)	Los Angeles	yes	Thank you for your support of California Humanities through the CAC’s Statewide Regional Network (SRN) grant program. As the statewide affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the only nonprofit devoted to promoting the humanities throughout California, it is especially impactful to receive funding from the California Arts Council that helps us connect Californians to ideas & one another through the intersection of the arts & humanities. The SRN grant program has enabled California Humanities to support the cultural ecosystem of California through statewide grantmaking that amplifies visual and performing arts public programming through an equitable, humanities lens. We are very concerned about erasing the SRN grants as a distinct program because the reach of regional and statewide networks explicitly advances the geographic equity goals of the CAC Strategic Framework, meeting needs and providing services in underresourced regions or in underserved urban areas. California Humanities relies on the State Regional Network grant and strongly opposes the erasing of the program.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Jenny Darlington-Person (She/Her/Hers) Arts Council of Placer County & Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Nevada County	Placer	no	I ask you to not eliminate the SRN grant program. Service organizations are vital to small and rural artists and arts organizations. In 2018 as new ED of a rural arts organization, the services and training ACSO provided me were instrumental in my success leading that organization through my first year and the following pandemic. Without the knowledge ACSO helped me gain, that organization may not still exist today. In 2020, ACSO had already built a network of artists and arts organizations, which it quickly activated to provide critical support for our orchestral community. My staff and I started virtually meeting with peers, which was instrumental in helping us navigate the cessation of our live programs and pivot to virtual programs. Arts services organizations, provide critical training, professional development, and advocacy. Due to the significant cost, small and rural organizations cannot individually access these resources without service organizations. Large organizations have entire departments and senior staff train new staff. However, small organizations often have one person doing working on their own with limited access to knowledge and training. Service organizations are the great equalizer: They provide accessible conferences, peer groups, webinars. Our geographically underserved arts organizations will be most impacted if arts service organizations cannot access SRN funding.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
January 24, 2025	Julie Baker, California for the Arts	Sacramento	yes	<p>The SRN program provides essential infrastructure for artists, cultural bearers, and producing organizations, offering services such as advocacy, grant writing, business development, legal support, and disaster preparedness. While these services may not always seem high-profile, they reach a wide range of constituents, including youth, veterans, folk and traditional artists, and underserved communities. Our network provides services that the government cannot. Eliminating the SRN program will create confusion, increase administrative burdens, and generate unnecessary competition. The current system allows networks and their constituents to apply for different grants, helping smaller organizations build the capacity to apply. If this proposal is a response to a scarcity of resources, how does removing the SRN benefit the field? SRNs actively advance the geographic equity goals outlined in the CAC’s strategic framework. Eliminating this program risks defunding organizations that play a crucial role in advocacy and crisis response, such as during the LA fires. ...</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Jenny Darlington Person, Arts Council of Placer County	Placer	no	<p>SRNs provide vital support to rural and small budget arts organizations. In 2019, as a new executive director, I would have been lost without the professional development and advocacy resources offered by the Association of California Symphony Orchestras. Large institutions have senior staff to train and mentor newer staff, but smaller organizations—such as the Auburn Symphony, which has just one executive director and one part-time staff member— depend on SRNs to fill that gap. Without SRN support, these organizations will struggle, and in lean years like this, they will become even more essential. Second, SRNs can respond to crises in ways that government agencies cannot. Government cannot and should not be expected to turn on a dime, but SRNs can. We saw this during the pandemic, when SRNs provided immediate support to the field, and now, in the wake of recent fires, SRNs are stepping up to help affected artists and organizations. Their role is irreplaceable. I strongly urge the Council to preserve this program.</p>
	Kara Goger, Mariposa County Arts Council	Mariposa	no	<p>important and unique role that grantee organizations in the Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) category play in California’s arts ecosystem. These organizations connect the field, create pathways for collaboration, and help maximize the impact of arts funding across the state. They do the critical work of strengthening networks and building the infrastructure that supports our sector. Eliminating the SRN program would remove a key support system for arts organizations, particularly those in rural and under-resourced areas. SRNs provide the structural foundation that allows smaller organizations to thrive. We believe that keeping the SRN program as a standalone grant category is essential to ensuring that this vital work continues</p>

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	Clay Moeen River, Mariposa Arts Council	Mariposa	no	SRNs across the state provide essential support, particularly in rural areas, and program grants are critical to these small, rural communities. I urge you to retain distinct programming grants, especially for arts education, as collapsing them would devastate our ability to serve our communities. These organizations provide artists like me with meaningful employment.
	Victor Payan, Media Arts Santa Ana	Orange	no	strongly support restoring the Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) as a discrete program. If the proposed consolidation of programs is aimed at addressing the shrinking budget, I urge you to defend and restore the budget instead. Expertise from panelists who understand the needs of various disciplines and organizations is critical, and it would be difficult to reverse these changes once made
	Dave Mack, Artist Magnet, Justice Alliance	Alameda	no	At last year’s California Arts Summit, Nataki Garrett, one of the first Black women to lead a major regional theater in the country, spoke about the challenges she faced, including anti-Blackness and death threats. She persevered through resilience, and programs like those funded by SRNs provide the platform for such voices to be heard. Without SRNs, many of us would not have had the opportunity to hear Nataki speak and be inspired to continue creating art. I find it confusing that if the challenge is competition due to a lean year, the SRNs are not also being integrated into general operating grants. Instead of forcing SRNs to compete against their own members, I encourage you to keep the SRN program distinct. Thank you for your time and for listening.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Sean Fenton, Theatre Bay Area	San Francisco	yes	<p>program as a distinct grant category. SRNs play an essential role in California’s arts ecosystem. They are often the first to step in during crises, such as providing emergency services during wildfires, guiding organizations through the challenges of the pandemic, and supporting communities under attack. This is the work of art service organizations—caring for artists and arts workers and responding quickly and directly in ways that government agencies cannot. SRNs like ours provide regrant funding to individual artists and small-budget companies, especially those without fiscal sponsors, and support historically excluded groups. We convene artists for peer-to-peer gatherings, advocate tirelessly for the artists we serve, and conduct vital research into new arts business models. As arts organizations across the state struggle to stay afloat, SRNs are increasingly critical. It’s important to recognize that SRNs and State-Local Partners (SLPs) serve different roles. While SLPs focus on county-level priorities, SRNs operate as grassroots advocates and service providers. Eliminating SRNs as a distinct program risks leaving organizations like ours with limited options for sustaining this essential work.</p>

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	Gail McNeely, Youth Arts Alive	Santa Barbara	no	<p>wanted to emphasize how crucial the Cultural Pathways program has been to our work in creative youth development. The program has funded part of our director salary, teaching artists, site coordinators, and art interns, and we hope that the consolidation you're considering will continue to support arts education outside the school setting. We are also sponsored by a fiscal sponsor, the Santa Barbara County Action Network, and we hope this partnership will continue to be possible in the future. Santa Barbara County Action Network has been vital in helping us provide eight years of free arts education here in Santa Maria. Regardless of the decision you make today, I hope you will continue supporting programs like Cultural Pathways. Two years ago, it was through Creative Youth Development and the Youth Arts Action and Impact Project grants that we were able to get off the ground.</p>
	Jennifer Caballero, California Association of Museums	Los Angeles	yes	<p>This consolidation risks losing the expertise of the peer evaluators who review SRN Grant applications, which will almost certainly lead to unfair assessments. As the leader of a small organization that reviews a large number of proposals, I can say that implementing such a major structural change to the grant categories will have farreaching consequences that could lead to regret. Having a dedicated SRN panel is crucial to ensuring fair evaluation. Moreover, now is not the time to disrupt the already small CAC staff, especially with the anticipated loss of two key team members. Retraining panelists is a heavy burden for CAC staff. I also believe that networks are exceptionally well-suited to provide long-term support for the restoration and recovery of communities affected by disasters.</p>

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	Sarah Weber, Association of California Symphony Orchestras	Los Angeles	yes	<p>Since the CAC created the SRN program in 2002, it has empowered organizations like ours to provide critical work in the field, including representation, capacity building, crisis response, and advocacy for public arts funding. Even in times of limited state budgets, SRNs have consistently received support because of their proven impact. For example, last year, we mobilized our constituents to advocate for sustained CAC funding, helping mitigate severe budget cuts. We were even mentioned in the opening letter of this week’s meeting packet for responding to community crises like the LA wildfires. With only about \$2 million in SRN funding, we are able to serve thousands of artists and arts organizations, many historically marginalized and underserved, in geographically diverse areas. This is why we see a disconnect between the CAC’s historic support for SRNs and this proposal to eliminate our contributions by removing our grant program.</p>

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	Gail Lopes, Arts for LA	Los Angeles	yes	<p>We understand the Council's limited capacity and the immense pressure it faces, especially in times of crisis, but service and arts organizations like ours face similar challenges. For instance, Arts for LA staff have been actively supporting the community in navigating the devastating wildfires through grassroots engagement, coordinating with funders, and offering emergency assistance to arts workers directly impacted by the fires.</p> <p>These efforts highlight the unique and essential role of service organizations in providing immediate support. SRNs like Arts for LA are effective in advocating for greater funding and ensuring that resources are distributed where they're most needed.</p> <p>The extensive unintended consequences shared today should be fully recognized and studied before pursuing this consolidation. In December's meeting, Council members acknowledged that it defies logic to consolidate programs only to delineate them further in the guidelines. We are concerned that these changes will result in less funding for smaller organizations.</p>

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	Marsian DeLellis, Los Angeles Performance Practice	Los Angeles	yes	<p>LAPP fills in the gaps of creative infrastructure through free consultations, workshops, residencies, and opportunities for contemporary performance makers from underrepresented communities. We've also re-granted CAC fellowships and supported artists in a city that ranks number one for artists but 466th in state funding.</p> <p>Our limited capacity has been compounded by the recent wildfire emergency. We quickly deployed a survey to 1,372 artists to assess pressing needs, and 85% of them have been impacted by the fires, most of them already living in financial precarity. We have been helping these artists navigate resources in what are often complicated, topdown relief efforts.</p> <p>This has only been possible because of our SRN network. I've also served as a CAC panelist, so I am intimately aware of the demands placed on reviewers. Consolidating programs would have a dangerous impact, erasing a vast network of artists from across the state and diminishing our ability to support them. I urge you to amend the Committee's recommendations and keep SRN as a distinct program, as it has been for over 20 years.</p>

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	Bob Lehman, San Diego Museum Council	San Diego	yes	<p>I am the Vice Chair of the San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission, Chair of San Diego Arts Matters, and Executive Director of the San Diego Museum Council, which represents over 80 museums in San Diego County.</p> <p>All of these organizations operate within the State and Regional Networks, benefiting hundreds of organizations, artists, and tens of thousands of arts professionals and volunteers. SRNs are vital to our state’s arts and culture ecosystem and must be preserved. These networks foster collaboration, resource sharing, and collective impact. Just last night, we gathered over a hundred museum professionals and artists to kick off Museum Month, which will bring \$4 million in earned media to all of our museums. This event also provided the opportunity for museums and artists to meet with Assemblymember Chris Ward, Chair of the California State Assembly Committee for Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism.</p> <p>When resources are limited, state and regional networks offer a cost-effective approach to supporting organizations, artists, and professionals. Having the SRN designation allows us to reach corporate and private foundation funding, which helped us secure significant funding this year.</p> <p>Please keep the SRN program as a distinct funding category.</p>

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	Gloria Ruiz Oster, California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA SoCal)	Orange	yes	<p>The significance of our work in supporting the infrastructure of the arts through collaboration, advocacy, and outreach, as well as providing broad-based, innovative service to artists and arts organizations, needs to be evaluated on its own merits. It should be supported with higher grant amounts than what is currently available in general operating funding. We feel strongly that the proposed change could further destabilize the arts sector in California, which is already vulnerable.</p> <p>The Southern California wildfire disaster is just one example of the unique role that SRNs play within the arts ecosystem. Through our broad reach, we have been able to quickly assemble resources and information, conduct sector-wide assessments of needs, and develop programs offering assistance and support. Additionally, we've begun evaluating the long-term implications of losses in intellectual property, employment, equipment, and facilities.</p> <p>Our services and support safeguard the sustainability of individual artists and organizations. Reducing available grant amounts and forcing SRNs to compete for funding will undermine our ability to serve the statewide sector.</p>
	Kat Harper, National Steinbeck Center	Monterey	no	<p>As a larger organization, our educational literary programs and art exhibitions often host smaller independent artists or nonprofits that directly serve our underserved and migrant population.</p> <p>I fear that if programs are consolidated, it will make it even more difficult for organizations like ours to support these artists and organizations in our community. Smaller groups will get even more lost in the shuffle than we already are.</p>

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	Nancy Olivares, California Humanities	Oakland, Los Angeles	yes	<p>As the statewide affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the only nonprofit devoted to promoting the humanities throughout California, it's especially impactful for us to receive funding from the California Arts Council. The SRN Grant program has enabled us to support California's cultural ecosystem by amplifying visual and performing arts and public programming through an equitable humanities lens.</p> <p>The SRN award supports our Humanities for All program, which is designed to reach new applicants and increase access to funding with fewer barriers to applying. This program has been highly successful at attracting new applicants, especially from rural areas and small arts organizations, creating vibrant cultural programs that may not traditionally align with California Arts Council applicants.</p> <p>While we support the CAC's goal of innovation, we're concerned that consolidating SRN grants could lead to confusion and the loss of individual program intent and support for the communities we serve.</p>
	Raëlle Dorfan, Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles	Los Angeles	yes	<p>service organizations should remain a distinct category. We are deeply entrenched in our respective communities and act as conduits for others. The ongoing wildfires in California are a clear example of how municipal and arts service organizations work in close, constant communication to identify needs and collaborate on ways to support the field.</p> <p>We understand the nuances of our communities and, having built decades of meaningful relationships and trust, we are able to respond quickly, especially during unexpected events. Service organizations bridge divides and build resilience, thriving in collaboration rather than competition. We hope you agree that this value must remain distinct and visible as you revisit the proposed program changes.</p>

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	Jason Jong, Office of Arts and Culture, Sacramento	Sacramento	no	I want to address the potential absorption of the Cultural Pathways program into a one size-fits-all approach, which I believe would disrupt the unique nature of this program. Cultural Pathways provides both general operating and professional development support to communities of color, immigrant, refugee, and tribal communities, allowing them to work together in a learning cohort. This approach is distinct from other general operating opportunities and comes at a critical time when California needs to strongly support these communities. Similarly, the proposed consolidation of SRNs would erase an important, distinct approach. SRNs and State-Local Partners (SLPs) function as complementary support networks, not as interchangeable services. I urge the Council to reconsider this proposal.
	Alma Robinson, California Lawyers for the Arts	San Francisco	yes	During the very difficult years when the California Arts Council was receiving only \$1.1 million per year from the general fund, California Lawyers for the Arts worked with State-Local organizations and arts groups around the state to produce a series of symposia on arts and healthy communities. These programs were broadcast statewide, and we followed up with arts and environmental dialogues. We also currently run a successful reentry program for formerly incarcerated individuals, providing arts training and internships. We've placed 175 people in the last three years. We could not do this work without strong support as a service organization. Please reconsider the recommendation to consolidate SRNs.
	Julie Baker, California for the Arts:	Sacramento	yes	...if you had had an overlay in that image of where the Creative Corps reached, which is brilliant and we want more funding for that, and where SRNs reach, you probably would have seen a tremendous amount of dots that may have changed your vote.

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	Barbara Palley (Turnaround Arts)	Los Angeles	yes	<p>Please vote NO on 2025-26 Programs b/c of the proposed consolidation of General Operating, Statewide &amp; Regional Networks (SRN), and Cultural Pathways into one grant program. Already, far too many smallbudget organizations, particularly those serving youth, have reported being unable to secure CAC funding this year following budget cuts. They are vital to our communities and are now on the brink of closure. If competition is already this intense with distinct programs, consolidating them and putting them in direct competition could be catastrophic. SRNs actively advance geographic equity goals from the CAC Strategic Framework. We contribute to the health and vitality of our network, providing services and infrastructure to equitably access resources, technical support, and networking opportunities. Now is the time to encourage collaboration, not competition– and SRNs have proven that they bridge divides and build resilience. SRN strengthens the creative workforce by being responsive to the needs of the field. As conveners we further the interests of artists, arts workers, culture bearers, and community organizations by providing practical services like capacity building, with a focus on equity. 21 the proposed program changes We hope you agree that this value must remain distinct and visible as you revisit . Turnaround Arts supports a network of arts organizations, artists and schools across the state, to support communities impacted by systemic oppression.</p>

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	Anonymous The Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	yes	As my colleagues have artfully shared, Service Organizations should remain a category unto themselves. Deeply entrenched in our respective communities, conduits to each other and for others, one need look no further than the current wildfires to identify the organizations, both municipal and art service organizations, that remain in close and constant communication to identify need and pursue ways to collaborate and streamline information to best support the field. Understanding the nuances in our respective communities alongside decades long attention to building meaningful relationships - trust between artist and art service organization, particularly during unexpected events, is once again revealing itself as LA County remains in crisis. Additionally, Service Organizations programming is unique within the sector and thoughtfully catered to members and constituents, often filling voids while ensuring equal access to quality services. Thriving in collaboration and not in competition, Service Organizations have proven that they bridge divides and build resilience.
	Sarah Weber, Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	yes	SRNs operate differently from the arts organizations and artists we serve. We should not compete with them for funding or be evaluated side by side. SRNs help CAC reach priority communities, such as underserved regions, small organizations, individual artists, and those with limited resources/experience.

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	Jennifer Caballero, California Association of Museums, San Diego County	San Diego	yes	<p>The initial Program Committee proposal in December 2024 was discussed and deemed not acceptable by the majority of the Council. Seeing the proposal there seems now no recognition of the points made by Council members following public comment and discussion about the retention of important grant funding objectives that are being achieved through the implementation of the funds for networks. Please consult with your colleagues to amend this aspect of the proposed committee recommendations to bring back Statewide and Regional Networks. Also in my experience as a past CAC grant panelist I'm concerned about the impact of the Program Committee recommendation. Panelist training would be made significantly more challenging by adopting this approach. CAC staff have been doing excellent work to prepare panelists to review and score proposals 23 while adhering to important standards. The current recommendation by the committee will have the effect of reducing clarity available for training these panelists, as well as increasing the burden on CAC staff in their capacity to provide support for a well-prepared grant panel for each of the remaining categories. The recommendations voiced by more than half of the Council members in December 2024 needs to be addressed, and the impact on the panelists and CAC staff must be recognized before you vote. The Council should strengthen the potential of these grant funds to ensure their statewide and regional impact.</p>

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	Shayla James, San Diego Creative Youth Development Network, San Diego County	San Diego	yes	<p>I'm the Director of the SD CYD Network. I'm disappointed to see the CAC consolidating multiple programs. SDCYDN has made a commitment to its members not to go after funding that would be in competition with CYD and arts education organizations. With the SRN grant we have been able to build multigenerational leadership capacity by compensating a Director and Admin Assistant and offer stipends to youth. I support the continuation of the SRN and CYD grants. CYD is a different practice than Arts Education Exposure. Consolidating grants programs mixes programs together that have different practices and outcomes. How will panelists be able to differentiate between programs and score the programs equitably across the application pools? Networks and specific programs like CYD are important parts of the arts and culture ecosystem. I hope that CAC continues to examine how a diverse offering of grant programs supporting individual artists, arts producing orgs, arts service orgs, plus general operating, technical assistance, programming supports all of us in the sector in unique and nuanced ways. SDCYDN has a variety of members who are in the CYD field, arts and culture sector, including arts administrators, teaching artists, artists, educators, practitioners, and researchers. Without the possibility of receiving funding through the SRN grant, our Network will have to reexamine how we apply for grants with the CAC. I sincerely hope that you reconsider consolidating the SRN grant.</p>

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	Meg Hamill, California Poets in the Schools, Sonoma County	Sonoma	yes	<p>California Poets in the Schools has been a grateful recipient of the SRN grant for many years. I am deeply concerned about the consolidation proposed that eliminates the SRN grant pathway. After the December meeting, strong arguments were made against this consolidation, and it is disappointing to see that our concerns have been largely ignored. Our organization, like many of the SRN grantees, connects a statewide network of artists. We offer career services to poets, specifically a respected training and certification that paves the way for poets to build careers as teaching artists in their home regions. An affiliation with our respected statewide organization allows them the clout to be able to work and earn valuable income in some of the most remote and underserved regions of the state. SRNs such as ours are agile, well-connected, and capable of responding to crises on the ground. As an example of what this can look like – within a week of the horrific devastation wrought by the LA fires, we opened up an immediate grant pathway for LA poets to receive funding in order to serve impacted communities by offering poetry creation sessions to youth in any setting – including shelters, care camps, and schools. We support artists to support their 26 communities, quickly, exactly where the need is, with deep care and hyper-local expertise. Our organization and all SRN’s serve a specific and important purpose in our state. Please don’t eliminate this grant pathway.</p>

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	Alma Robinson, California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County	San Francisco	yes	<p>The Statewide and Regional Networks program of the California Arts Council has been funding service organizations as a distinct program since 2001-02. During the bleak years of 2003 to 2013, when our Arts Council was allocated a mere \$1.1 million from the General Fund, CAC funding of service organizations continued as we mounted vigorous advocacy campaigns and programs to build public awareness of the value of the arts. For example, California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA) held three symposia in LA, San Jose and Walnut Creek on California Arts and Healthy Communities that were broadcast on cable television networks for statewide distribution. The significance of our work in building the infrastructure of the arts through collaboration, advocacy and outreach to the public, as well as service to artists and arts organizations, needs to be evaluated on its own merits. Furthermore, the proposed change to eliminate funding service organizations as a distinct program could further destabilize the arts field in California, which is so vulnerable at this time.</p>
	Jennifer Oliver, A Step Beyond, San Diego County	San Diego	no	<p>As Director of A Step Beyond (ASB), I am deeply concerned about the CAC’s plan to consolidate multiple grant programs, particularly the SRN and CYD grants. Consolidating these programs would heighten competition, disproportionately impacting small-budget organizations, with potentially catastrophic consequences. While I understand the desire to streamline funding, merging grants and then subdividing them through guidelines suggests a prioritization of efficiency over support for service organizations that ASB directly benefits from. 27 The SRN program plays a crucial role in advancing the geographic equity goals outlined in the CAC’s Strategic Framework. SRNs provide vital services and infrastructure, particularly during economic downturns. These programs help sustain organizations like ASB, and their value must remain distinct and visible.</p>

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	Richard Stein, Arts Orange County, Orange County	Orange	no	We urge CAC to restore the Statewide & Regional Networks as a discrete funding program and not include them in the General Operating Support grants program. There could hardly be a more compelling argument for this than the fact that in today’s Council meeting agenda, the CAC Executive Director’s own report cites the vital role that SRNs (and SLPs) are playing in the CAC’s own response to the catastrophic fires in the Los Angeles region. There are indeed benefits from streamlining and consolidating many of the CAC’s grants programs--but doing so with the SRNs program is actually counterproductive.
	Moisés Esparza, Media Arts Center San Diego, San Diego County	San Diego	yes	My name is Moisés Esparza and I am the Director of Development of the Media Arts Center San Diego. I am greatly concerned that the California Arts Council (CAC) is considering consolidating funding opportunities. Last year, our non-profit was significantly affected by the CAC’s decision to limit our ability to apply to multiple Arts and Youth Grant Programs (CYD, Arts Education Exposure, and Arts Integration Training). Several of our transformative educational initiatives suffered, creating a ripple effect that affected the communities we promised to serve. We are grateful to be current recipients of the CAC’s Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) grant program. Through this funding, we have been able to create a network of support for emerging filmmakers looking to use visual storytelling tools to create social change in the San Diego border region. We were hopeful that this program, which we refer to as Frontera Filmmakers, would be sustained beyond 2025 to maximize its impact. Consolidating this grant would be a great hindrance to the network of support that we’ve been able to build. MACSD is able to employ filmmakers, art administrators, community leaders, and educators thanks to the support of initiatives like SRN. Without this program, we would be at a precipice, forced to make decisions in diametric opposition to our founding mission and ideals. We hope the California Arts Council reconsiders their decision.

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	Marsian De Lellis, Los Angeles Performance Practice, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	yes	<p>Our programs for artists fill in the gaps of creative infrastructure, through free consultations, workshops, residencies, and opportunities to present new work — with a focus on contemporary performance makers from underrepresented communities. We have also served as an administering org for CAC 31 Fellowships. Our limited capacity in a city that ranks number one in artists, but 466th in state funding has been compounded by the wildfire emergency. Through our SRN network we quickly deployed a survey to 1,372 artists to assess pressing needs within hours of the fires. 85% have been impacted, many of whom already live in financial precarity. They have been hindered by ash, air quality, and unhealthy living conditions. Those working nomadically are losing income from closures at community spaces throughout the city. The home of a dancer from our ACCELERATOR program burned down in the Eaton Fire as they underwent cancer treatment. We’ve been helping artists like these navigate through resources and complicated forms when they’re most traumatized. In top down relief efforts, we have advocated for contemporary performance makers due to our intimate knowledge of them through the SRN program Consolidation would have a dangerous impact, erasing a vast network of artists from across the state and our ability to support them. Please amend the committee’s recommendations. Keep SRN a distinct program as it has been for over 20 years.</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Nancy Olivares, California Humanities, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	yes	<p>As the statewide affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the only nonprofit devoted to promoting the humanities throughout California, it is especially impactful to receive funding from the California Arts Council that helps us connect Californians to ideas &amp; one another through the intersection of the arts &amp; humanities. 32 The SRN grant program has enabled California Humanities to support the cultural ecosystem of California through statewide grantmaking that amplifies visual and performing arts public programming through an equitable, humanities lens. The (SRN) award supports our Humanities for All Arts &amp; Humanities Quick Grant program, designed to reach new applicants and increase access to funding, with shorter-term projects and fewer barriers to applying. This program has been very successful at attracting new applicants, including many from rural areas or very small arts organizations to create vibrant cultural programs that may not be traditional California Arts Council applicants. While we support the streamlining of CAC grant programs and the CAC’s drive to innovate in alignment with the goals of the Strategic Framework, we are also concerned that consolidating the SRN grants as a distinct program because the reach of regional and statewide networks explicitly advances the geographic equity goals of the CAC Strategic Framework. We urge the council to keep the SRN grant as a distinct CAC program with its own line item and guidelines. Thank you.</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Lana Richards, PlayGround, San Francisco County	Alameda	yes	<p>This comment is in response to the proposal to consolidate General Operating, Statewide &amp; Regional Networks (SRN), and Cultural Pathways into one grant application opportunity. I am writing as a representative of PlayGround, a recipient of the Statewide &amp; Regional Networks (SRN) grant. As an Arts Service organization, we support hundreds of playwrights and emerging artists across California. SRN has been a critical source of funding for us, and has allowed us to support close to 1,000 artists annually. The SRN has uniquely understood our place as an Arts Service organization in the larger arts ecosystem, and is one of the few funding opportunities that does this. The dedicated SRN program makes a huge difference for us. It helps us be distinguished in a pool where our work would otherwise be misunderstood or under-appreciated. If placed in a single General Ops program, we would be forced to compete against more public-facing and higher profile arts institutions, and judged by a peer panel that is not as familiar with the contributions of service-based organizations. On a dollar for dollar basis, service orgs frequently help serve more regions of the state than a single arts org can and are often helping to invest in historically marginalized or excluded communities, as PlayGround does. We are concerned that this free-for-all approach will lead to a disproportionate reduction in funding for these organizations.</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Cati Porter, Riverside County	Riverside	no	<p>Dear Council, I am deeply disappointed in the decision to consolidate the SRN with Gen Ops. As a multi-year SRN grantee, we believe our network is what makes us strong. By eliminating the SRN as a distinct program you risk depriving Californians of the benefits of an arts service organization. Service organizations are about their constituents who become a family. They rely on us to help them navigate the business of being a literary artist, connect them with opportunities, and provide a sustainable vertically-integrated model where students learn to be teachers, and teachers learn how to administer programs, and so on. But many of us--including Inlandia--are not large or well-funded, so when you scoop us little fish out of our usual fish bowl and drop us into the ocean, we are at risk of being devoured. We love and appreciate the California Arts Council and all you do for all of us in the arts community. Please find a way that keeps it fair and equitable for us all. Consolidation is not the answer.</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Alma Robinson, California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County	San Francisco	yes	<p>Dear CAC Council Members and Staff: It is unfortunate that the Council decided yesterday to eliminate the funding of SRN organizations as a distinct category. One error in analysis that I'd like to point out relates to the map of the state of California that compared current funding locations to the funding distribution that 36 was made possible by the one-time Culture Corps program. This visual image was striking, but it failed to tell the whole story and may have contributed to council members' incomplete understanding of how our sector functions. As far as I know, service organizations have never been asked to map where our services are delivered or to list the various counties where we have members. I can assure you that as a statewide organization, California Lawyers for the Arts is serving artists and arts organizations who reside all over the state, not just in the five counties where we have our offices (San Francisco, Alameda, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego.) If service organizations were asked to produce a map of where our members and constituents are, it would show a different story about the breadth and reach of our services. By changing your funding strategy for SRN organizations, the Council may have just begun engineering the decline of the state's fragile ecosystem for support of the arts. Is that really what we need for our state's arts community at this vulnerable time? Alma Robinson, Executive Director California Lawyers for the Arts</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Trevor Davis, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	no	I am deeply concerned about the impacts of this proposed consolidation. SRNs were recognized in this week’s meeting packet for their critical role in responding to crises like wildfires. However, the proposed changes fail to reflect their immense value. SRNs are agile, grassroots advocates, directly supporting local arts organizations and artists where larger entities cannot. In contrast, SLPs work at the grasstops level, representing broader county interests. Both play vital yet distinct roles. Consolidation risks blurring these distinctions, increasing administrative burdens, and creating unnecessary competition among networks. Regional networks are uniquely positioned to pool resources, minimize duplication, and maximize efficiency, delivering greater community benefits than isolated organization-specific funding. Yet, this consolidation threatens to dismantle them. Foundations have turned away from arts funding post-pandemic, making SRNs more reliant on government support. Funders often undervalue SRNs because they’re seen as indirect service providers, which makes CAC’s dedicated support essential. I urge you to reconsider this proposal and preserve the vital role these networks play. Best regards, Trevor Davis
	Coalition of County Arts Agencies (SLPs)	all	no	This message is submitted on behalf of the Coalition of County Arts Agencies which is comprised of all of the CAC’s State-Local Partners. The Coalition of County Arts Agencies would like to acknowledge the important and unique role of the grantee organizations in the CAC’s Statewide and Regional Networks grant category. We believe that keeping the Statewide and Regional Networks as a stand-alone grant category is extremely important to support these essential organizations and to continue to advance the mission of the CAC which is to strengthen arts, culture, and creative expression as the tools to cultivate a better California for all and to support local arts infrastructure and activities statewide.

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Alma Robinson, California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County	San Francisco	yes	<p>Dear CAC Council Members and Staff: I am writing to encourage Council members to reconsider your decision to eliminate the funding of SRN organizations as a distinct category at your next meeting. I am urging you to seek information from the service organizations about where our members and constituents are located in order to build a full picture of the impact of our organizations. Without this information, you cannot make a fully informed decision about whether the sector has the statewide impact that merits a dedicated funding category. The map of the state of California that the Program Committee presented compared current funding locations to the distribution of the one-time Culture Corps grants. This visual image failed to tell the whole story and may have contributed to council members' incomplete understanding of how -- and where -- our sector functions. California Lawyers for the Arts, for example, is serving artists and arts organizations who reside all over the state, not just in the five counties where we have our offices (San Francisco, Alameda, Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Diego.) A map that shows where our members and constituents reside will show a more complete picture about the breadth of our educational, legal, job training and alternative dispute resolution services. Please reconsider your decision to eliminate the distinct funding for service organizations. Alma Robinson, Executive Director California Lawyers for the Arts January 28, 2025</p>

Council Meeting Date	Commenter	Business County of Commenter	Former SRN Grantee (yes/no)	Council Discussion & Public Comment
	Alyssa Villaire, Create CA, Los Angeles County	Los Angeles	yes	<p>Create CA’s entire team was disappointed to learn of the CAC’s vote to combine the Statewide &amp; Regional Networks grant program with the Cultural Pathways program. Create CA is the only statewide organization in California advocating for equitable arts education for every public school student. Like other SRN grantees, Create CA is purely devoted to supporting the arts. Also like other SRN grantees, our work is not considered “direct service,” which makes it more challenging to secure grant funding. Many funders and donors prefer to fund painting classes or arts supplies, and while these kinds of grants are important in the immediate sense, philanthropy and government must also support systems change work that will impact current and future California residents for decades to come. We’re disappointed to see the CAC getting rid of a 23 year-old grant program that has long supported the arts and culture sector in our state. This potential loss of funding for arts-supporting organizations will impact not only the SRN grantees, but other arts organizations that receive resources and technical support from SRN grantees. It’s no exaggeration to say that a decrease in grant funding for arts-supporting organizations will lead to the closure of arts and culture organizations in our state. To prevent this, Create CA hopes that the CAC will set aside an equivalent amount of \$2 million in funding for arts-supporting organizations within the new General Operating Support program.</p>

# CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL

## General Operating Support Consolidation Considerations

June 26, 2026

**REBECCA RATZKIN** | Equity Measures and Evaluation manager



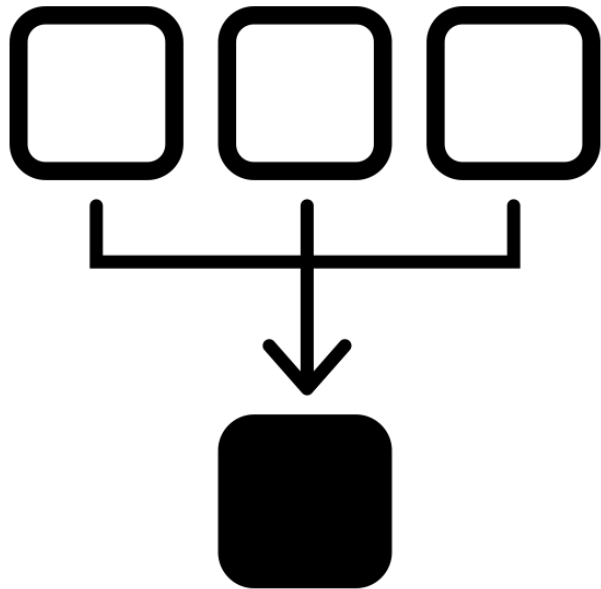
# AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. Background and Guiding Questions
2. Context
3. Deeper Program Review
4. 2025 Numbers – What Happened
5. Reflections and Next Steps
6. Questions/Discussion

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



# PROGRAM CONSOLIDATION DECISION-MAKING



Created by David Christensen  
from Noun Project

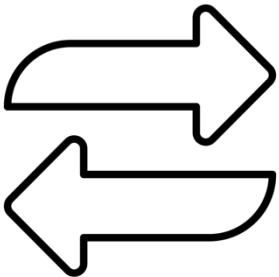
- In January 2025, Council voted to consolidate several programs into one General Operating Support.
- Strategic framework inspired recommendations.
- 50 public comments received voicing concern.
- Subsequent requests for an investigation from fall 2025.

# Research Questions



Created by Awicon  
from Noun Project

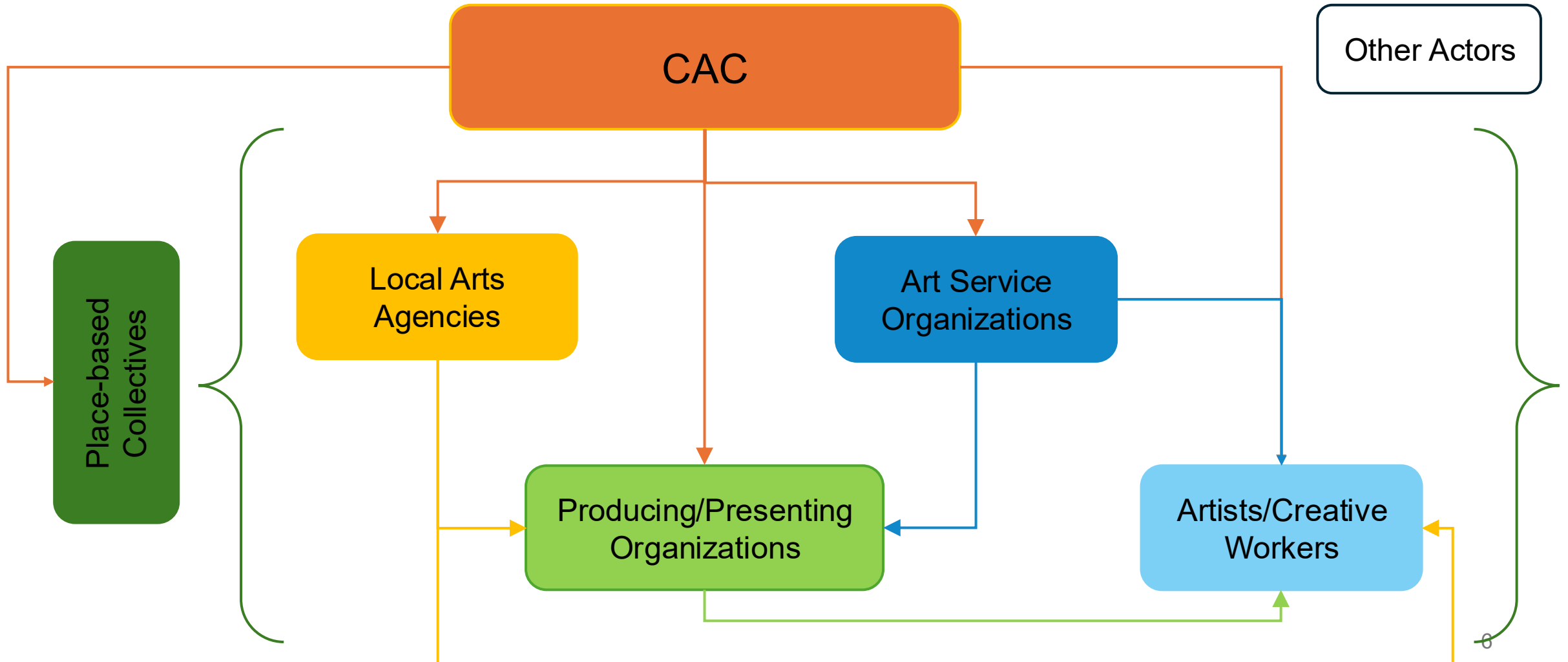
1. How has CAC supported Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN), Cultural Pathways (CP) and General Operating Support (GenOps) grants historically?



Created by Ahydra  
from Noun Project

2. What are the tradeoffs in consolidation of SRN and CP programs into a generic General Operating Support program?

# CAC's Ecosystem – A Partial View



**CAC's Ecosystem – CAC's grantmaking programs touch multiple segments of the arts and culture system, including direct service providers, educators, support systems and collaboratives.**

### **Artists/Creative Workers**

- Individual practitioners creating and teaching

### **Producing/Presenting**

- Direct service providers creating artistic experiences

### **Art Service Organizations**

- Training, advocacy, peer learning for artists & orgs

### **Local Arts Agencies**

- County-level arts providers & SLP partners

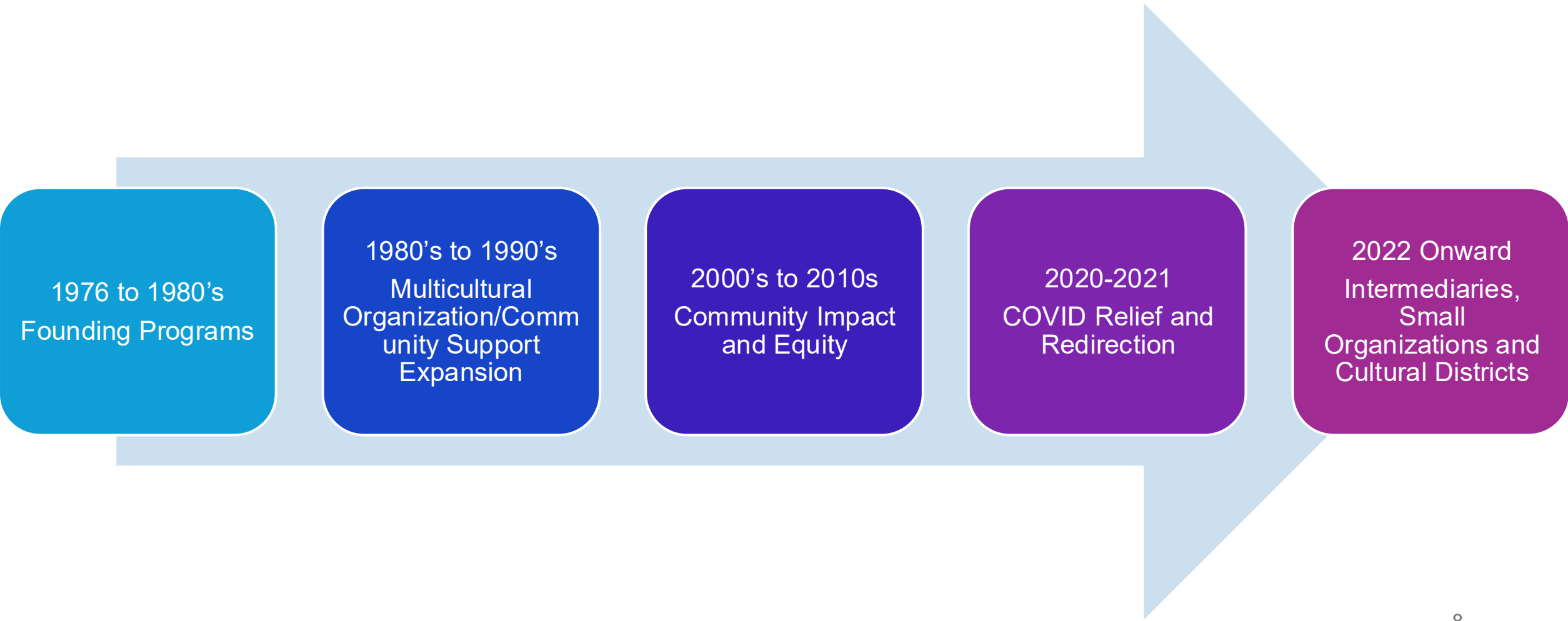
### **Place-based Collectives**

- Cultural districts & community development

### **Other Actors**

Funders, foundations, educational institutions

**CAC Historical Context - CAC has always invested in under-resourced organizations and infrastructure support organizations, and only introduced an “all-purpose” general operating support program in 2020.**



# The Statewide and Regional Network (SRN) grant program attracted a broad spectrum of network-based organizations.



Created by Didik Darmanto  
from Noun Project

**Artist Service and Infrastructure Organizations** primarily support others through variety of services and funding.



Created by Anggara Putra  
from Noun Project

**Arts Education and Youth Development** focused on providing arts instruction and creative learning experiences to young people.



Created by Arkinasi  
from Noun Project

**Cultural Identity and Community-Based Arts** center specific cultural communities, preserving cultural traditions and amplifying marginalized voices.



Created by Yoyon Pujiono  
from Noun Project

**Discipline-Specific Networks and Advocacy** memberships that unite practitioners within specific art forms.

# The Statewide and Regional Network (SRN) grant program attracted a broad spectrum of network-based organizations.



Created by Iconiq  
from Noun Project

**Presenting & Production Organizations** primarily focused on producing performances, festivals, exhibitions, or publications.



Created by Ion Market  
from Noun Project

**Conservation & Preservation** focused on preserving cultural heritage, archives, and artistic works.



Created by SAM Designs  
from Noun Project

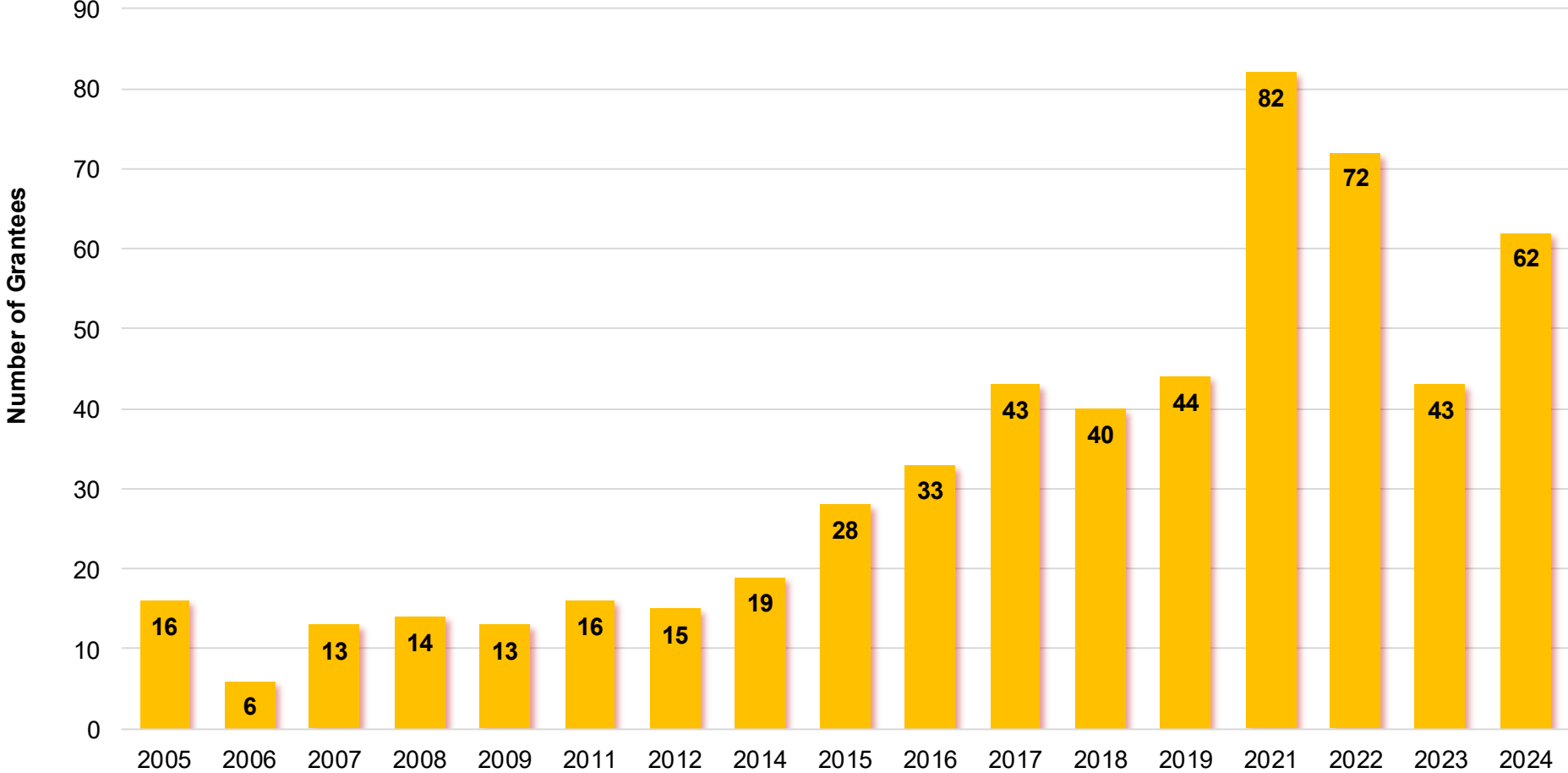
**Statewide Advocacy and Policy Organizations** work at systems level on arts policy, funding advocacy, and field-wide initiatives.



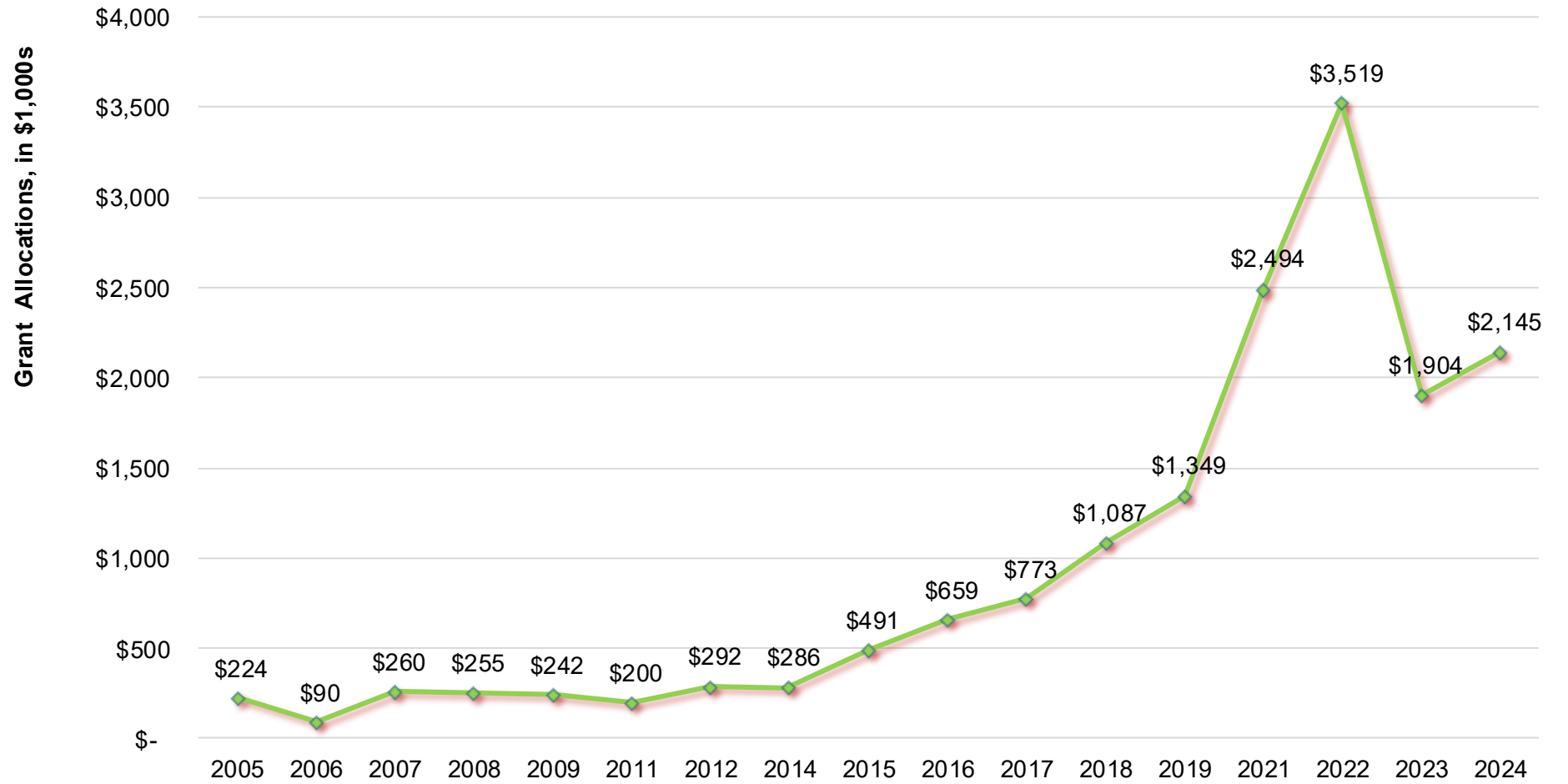
Created by Arkinasi  
from Noun Project

**Social Justice & Equity-Focused Arts** using arts as tools for healing, advocacy, and addressing systemic inequities

# Number of Statewide and Regional Network Grantees 2005 to 2024



### Total Grant Dollars Allocated for SRN/SRN Type Programs, 2005 to 2024 (in \$1,000s)



# Statewide and Regional Networks Total Operating Revenue

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE LAST FISCAL YEAR REPORTING	2017 (n=43)	2018 (n=41)	2019 (n=44)	2021 (n=81)	2022 (n=72)	2023 (n=43)	2024 (n=62)
Under \$250,000	33%	34%	39%	40%	31%	21%	34%
\$250,000 to \$500,000	21%	20%	18%	17%	22%	12%	11%
\$500,000 to \$1M	19%	17%	11%	16%	17%	16%	13%
\$1M to \$3M	23%	22%	23%	15%	15%	33%	31%
\$3M to \$5M	5%	5%	7%	6%	7%	9%	11%
\$5M to \$10M	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%
\$10M+	0%	2%	2%	4%	4%	7%	0%

# CULTURAL PATHWAYS



# The Cultural Pathways program was unique in that it included a companion grant for technical assistance (TA) to serve each grantee cohort.

## **Description**

Two-year operational support for small (under \$150k), new, emerging nonprofits rooted in and serving cultural communities

## **Design Principles**

Cultural responsiveness, peer-learning, geographic accessibility across the state, reinforcement of learning

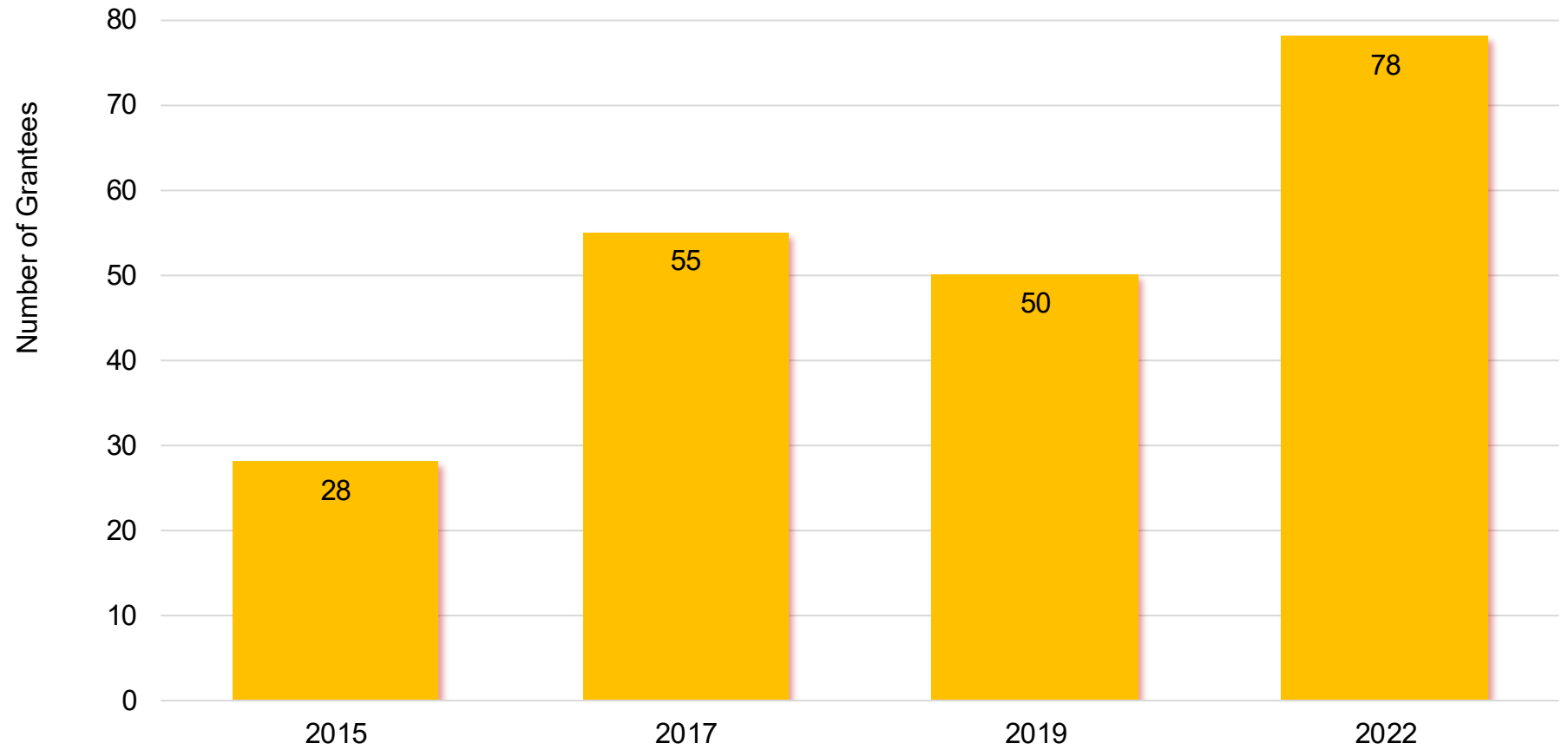
## **TA Services Included**

In-person convenings, virtual webinars, peer-learning, travel stipends, templates, and individual coaching; providers were Alliance for California Traditional Arts and World Trust Educational Services, Inc.

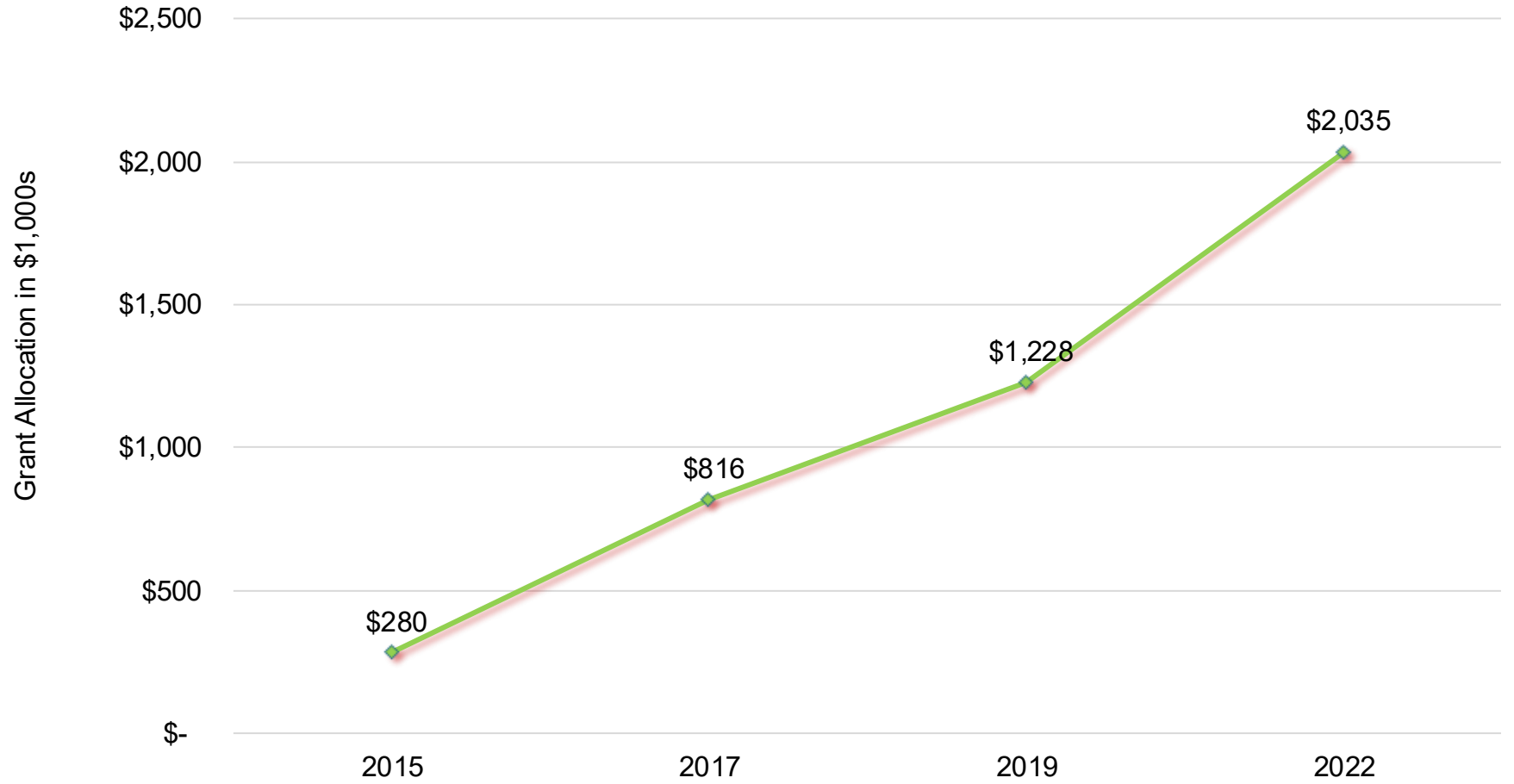
## **Report Take Aways**

Significant growth and support, but remaining challenges and needs – sustainable funding, staffing/infrastructure

## Number of Cultural Pathway Grantees 2015 to 2022



## Total Grant Dollars Allocated for Cultural Pathway Program 2015 to 2022 (in \$1,000s)



# **CONSOLIDATION – WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025**



**Without specific attention, the current General Operating Support grant program serves fewer art service networks and fewer past cultural pathways organizations.**



FY2025 was challenging for General Operating Support applicants



Only 17% of eligible GenOps applicants received a grant (236 out of 1,316)



Success rates dropped dramatically: SRN from 85% to 35%, CP from 94% to 17%



SRNs and CPs did apply to project-based grants

# Cultural Pathways in FY2025 General Operating Support

	<b>FY2025 General Operating Support</b>	<b>FY2022 Cultural Pathways Program</b>
Average grant amount	\$ 15,300	\$ 26,087
Number of CP grantees	5	78
Number of CP applicants	29	83
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 21,000	\$ 30,000

# Statewide and Regional Networks in FY2025 General Operating Support

	<b>FY2025 General Operating Support</b>	<b>FY2024 SRN</b>
SRN average grant amount	\$ 15,650	\$ 34,600
Number of SRN grantees	18	62
Number of SRN applicants	51	73
Maximum Grant Awarded	\$ 22,200	\$ 46,293

# REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS



# Reflecting on context and priorities

- Diversity of SRN cohorts may confuse the program's purpose apart from "all purpose" General Operating Support
- With no focused TA, General Operating Support, in its current form, is not equivalent to Cultural Pathways program
- Success rates of applicants varies dramatically between current General Operating and specified programs
- All grantees for last SRN program – FY2024 – had total operating revenues of \$5M or less (34% under \$250,000)

## Strategic Planning provides opportunity to dive deeper, do more research and evaluation, and consider path forward

- **Where should CAC invest to best serve the health of the arts and culture ecosystem of California?**
  - What role do networks play in strengthening the overall ecosystem?
  - What is CAC's role in supporting networks beyond State-Local Partners?
  - What is the impact of decreased support on organizations who have received ongoing funding?



# QUESTIONS



# THANK YOU

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# TAB G

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021



# Policy Memorandum

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

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**DATE:** June 26, 2026  
**TO:** All Council Members  
**FROM:** Allocations Committee – Phil Mercado and Nicola Miner  
**RE:** Discussion of FY 2026-27 Overall Allocations

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this memo is to outline Council considerations for determining overall allocation amounts for the FY2026-27 fiscal year. The Allocations Committee will use feedback from this discussion to develop recommendations for the final allocations vote at the August 14, 2026 public Council meeting.

**Background:** Per the Council Bylaws, the Allocations Committee (insert description here). At the December 12, 2025 public meeting, the Council voted to approve the following purposes, durations, and maximum request amounts for the FY2026-27 grant programs:

## State-Local Partners

- Grant Activity Period: 2 years
- Maximum Request Amount: \$75,000
- Program Purpose: Support and technical assistance for county-designated local arts agencies
- Funding Considerations: Open for all currently designated County Arts Agency partners (56 total, one of which serves two counties)

## State-Local Partner Mentorship

- Grant Activity Period: 1 year
- Maximum Request Amount: \$50,000
- Program Purpose: Support for the establishment by an existing State-Local Partner of a county-designated local arts agency in counties in which no such agency has currently been identified
- Funding Considerations: One grantee this year, as only Kings County does not have an officially designated County Arts Agency

## General Operating Support

- Grant Activity Period: 1 year

- Maximum Request Amount: \$30,000
- Program Purpose: Direct funding to arts and cultural organizations and arts service and network organizations in support of ongoing operations
- Funding Considerations: Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

### **Arts and Youth**

- Grant Activity Period: 1 year
- Maximum Request Amount: \$25,000
- Program Purpose: Supporting arts education and Creative Youth Development projects serving historically and systemically under-resourced youth in school and community-based settings
- Funding Considerations: Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

### **Impact Projects**

- Grant Activity Period: 1 year
- Maximum Request Amount: \$25,000
- Program Purpose: Supporting collaborative projects between artists and community members that address issues experienced by historically and systemically under-resourced communities
- Funding Considerations: Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

Council voted to apply the following priorities for General Operating Support, Arts and Youth, and Impact Projects grants:

- Applicants serving the lower quartiles of the Healthy Places Index;
- First-time CAC grantees; and
- Small organizations with annual Total Revenues (TRs) of \$250,000 or less

Organizations meeting each of these priorities will have additional weight added to their final panel ranks. All applications ranked 6 will be funded regardless of priority status.

### **Folk and Traditional Arts**

The Folk and Traditional Arts grant program was not open for applications this cycle as it is entering the second year of its two-year grant activity period. Only the first year of funding was allocated in FY2025-26, so Council will need to determine the second-year allocation.

- The maximum request amount was \$1 million per year for two years.
- In 2025, due to the ongoing budget reduction, Council voted to allocate \$828,415 for the first year.

## Individual Artist Fellowships

The Individual Artist Fellowship program was not open for application this cycle as it is entering the second year of its two-year grant activity period. Council allocated the full \$4.2 million grant award from the FY2025-26 budget, so no additional allocation needs to be made this year.

## Budget Context

The California Arts Council's proposed FY26/27 local assistance budget is \$24.3 Million, a net restoration of \$4 Million.

## Considerations for Council:

The Committee invites Council to consider the following factors and guiding questions in determining overall allocations per program:

- **Application Numbers:** The CAC received the following number of applications for each open program:
  - General Operating Support: 1,387
  - Arts and Youth: 705
  - Impact Projects: 532
  - State-Local Partners: 56
  - State-Local Partner Mentorship: 1
- ***Does Council want to align percentage of program funding to amount of request from the field?***
- **Funding History:** In FY2025-26, Council allocated similar buckets of funding to General Operating Support (\$3,559,680), Arts and Youth (\$4,076,626), and Impact Projects (\$3,098,558), which varied somewhat due to panel ranks and priorities. Another scenario, which Council discussed but eventually voted down, allocated double the funding (almost \$10 million) to General Operating Support grants.
- ***Does Council again want to balance percentage of program funding to these three programs?***
- **Award Amount:** In FY2025-26, Council voted to fund General Operating Support grantees down to 40% of request based on rank. This allowed CAC to award more grantees than would have been possible had the Council chosen only to fund down to 70% as it did for project-based programs. Historically, Council has not awarded less than 70% of request to project grants in order to ensure reasonable capacity to achieve the proposed scope of work given the actual award amount.
- ***Does Council again wish to award more grantees a smaller award in the General Operating Support program, or would Council prefer to award fewer, larger General Operating Support awards?***

## **Strategic Planning Recommendations**

The Committee also offers the following recommendations for consideration as Council engages in the strategic planning process:

- **Multi-Year Funding:** The Committee recommends that multi-year funding be considered as a key strategy.

Two- and three-year grants can be stabilizing forces for nonprofit arts organizations, especially amidst a chaotic national funding context. The agency is able to contract multi-year grants and pay them out year-by-year, so this strategy would not limit Council's ability to allocate the full Local Assistance budget each year in a balanced manner.

- **Flat Funding for State-Local Partners (SLP):** The Committee also recommends that as part of the Strategic Planning priority to develop a partnership framework for SLPs, Council should consider flat funding for this cohort, rather than tiered funding based on rank.

Panel ranks often vary significantly year-to-year, disrupting the SLPs' ability to engage in effective long-term financial planning (in FY2025, the difference in allocation to an SLP application ranking a 6 and one ranking a 4 was more than \$8,000). Further, lower-ranking applications often come from smaller, rural partners. In the current funding model, these organizations are then allocated fewer resources by the agency.

### **Other Supporting Documents:**

Sample Funding Scenario

**Report Prepared by: Josy Miller, Programs Manager, and  
Kristin Margolis, Director of Programs in collaboration with the Allocations Committee**

# ALLOCATIONS DISCUSSION

## Allocations Committee

**Phil Mercado and Nicola Miner**

6/18/2026



# BACKGROUND



# BACKGROUND



At the December 12, 2025 meeting, Council voted to approve the following purposes, durations, and maximum request amounts for the FY2026 grant programs:

## **APPROVED PROGRAMS**

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

## **2nd YEAR PROGRAMS**

- Folk and Traditional Arts – Administering Organization
- Individual Artist Fellowships - Administering Organization

# STATE-LOCAL PARTNERS

- **Grant Activity Period:** 2 years
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$75,000
- **Program Purpose:** Support and technical assistance for county-designated local arts agencies
- **Funding Considerations:** Open for all currently designated County Arts Agency partners (56 total, one of which serves two counties)

# STATE-LOCAL PARTNER MENTORSHIP

- **Grant Activity Period:** 1 year
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$50,000
- **Program Purpose:** Support for the establishment by an existing State-Local Partner of a county-designated local arts agency in counties in which no such agency has currently been identified
- **Funding Considerations:** One grantee this year, as only Kings County does not have an officially designated County Arts Agency

# GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

- **Grant Activity Period:** 1 year
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$30,000
- **Program Purpose:** Direct funding to arts and cultural organizations and arts service and network organizations in support of ongoing operations
- **Funding Considerations:** Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

# ARTS AND YOUTH

- **Grant Activity Period:** 1 year
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$25,000
- **Program Purpose:** Supporting arts education and Creative Youth Development projects serving historically and systemically under-resourced youth in school and community-based settings
- **Funding Considerations:** Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

# IMPACT PROJECTS

- **Grant Activity Period:** 1 year
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$25,000
- **Program Purpose:** Supporting collaborative projects between artists and community members that address issues experienced by historically and systemically under-resourced communities
- **Funding Considerations:** Priority applicants will be considered in allocations decisions (see priorities below)

# PRIORITIES

**Council voted to apply the following priorities for the Operating Support, Arts and Youth, and Impact Projects grants:**

Applicants serving the lower quartiles of the Healthy Places Index

First-time CAC grantees

Small organizations with annual Total Revenues (TRs) of \$250,000 or less

# FOLK AND TRADITIONAL ARTS - AO

- **2nd year of two-year grant**
- **Maximum Request Amount:** \$1,000,000 per year
- **Program Purpose:** Support to administer funding for artists and arts organizations' work in folk and traditional arts expressions
- **Funding Considerations:** Due to budget reduction, allocated \$828,415 in FY2025

# INDIVIDUAL ARTIST FELLOWSHIPS - AO

- **2nd year of two-year grant**
- **Total Allocation:** \$4,200,000
- **Program Purpose:** Supporting the creative practices of California artists at key career levels
- **Funding Considerations:** No further allocation necessary

# BUDGET CONTEXT



While the FY2026-27 budget is not yet finalized, the CAC's proposed budget appropriation in the Governor's May Budget Revision **restores a net \$4 Million to the Local Assistance Budget.**

# **CONSIDERATIONS FOR COUNCIL**



# APPLICATION NUMBERS

- **The CAC received the following number of applications for each open program:**
  - General Operating Support: 1,387
  - Arts and Youth: 705
  - Impact Projects: 532
  - State-Local Partners: 56
  - State-Local Partner Mentorship: 1

***Does Council want to align percentage of program funding to amount of request from the field, balancing operating support and project-based support?***

# FUNDING HISTORY

**In FY2025-26, Council allocated similar buckets of funding to:**

- General Operating Support (\$3,559,680)
- Arts and Youth (\$4,076,626)
- Impact Projects (\$3,098,558)

***Does Council again want to balance percentage of program funding to these three programs?***

# AWARD AMOUNT

## **In FY2025-26, Council voted to fund:**

- Operating Support grantees down to 40% of request, based on rank
- Project Support grantees down to 70% of request, based on rank

***Does Council again wish to award more grantees a smaller award in the Operating Support program, or would Council prefer to award fewer, larger Operating Support awards?***

# **STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**



# MULTI-YEAR FUNDING

Two- and three-year grants can be **stabilizing forces** for nonprofit arts organizations, especially amidst a **chaotic national funding context**.



# FLAT FUNDING FOR SLPs



In line with the **Strategic Planning priority** to develop a partnership framework for SLPs, Council may consider **flat funding for this cohort**, rather than tiered funding based on rank.

# SAMPLE FUNDING SCENARIO



# SAMPLE FUNDING SCENARIO

Program	2026 Approved Maximum Award	# of Applicants	Approx. Total Request Amount	Based on % of Applicants (GEN, AAY, PRJ)
State-Local Partners	\$75,000	57	\$4,275,000	\$4,275,000
State-Local Partner Mentorship	\$50,000	1	\$50,000	\$50,000
General Operating Support	\$30,000	1387	\$41,610,000	\$10,029,849
Arts and Youth	\$25,000	705	\$17,625,000	\$5,098,085
Impact Projects	\$25,000	532	\$13,300,000	\$3,847,066
Folk & Traditional Arts- AO (first year only)	\$1,000,000	1	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
		<b>2683</b>	<b>\$77,860,000</b>	
			<b>Allocated:</b>	<b>\$24,300,000</b>
			<b>Available:</b>	<b>\$24,300,000</b>
			<b>Amount Left:</b>	<b>\$-</b>

# DISCUSSION



# THANK YOU

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# TAB H

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California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 06/22/2021



## Policy Memorandum

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**DATE:** June 26, 2026  
**TO:** All Council Members  
**From:** Legislative Committee – Roxanne Messina Captor and Rick Stein  
**RE:** Legislative Committee Report to Council

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**Purpose:** To discuss and review updated legislative materials, as well as state & federal legislative updates.

**Background:**

Per Council's bylaws; the Legislative Committee shall provide updates on state & federal legislative activities and make recommendations to the Council.

**Activities:**

The Legislative Committee met Friday, June 12, 2026, to review and discuss several legislative and budget related items. Chief Deputy Director will lead legislative affairs for the agency and will continue to monitor and track bills that will directly impact CAC or may impact CAC's priorities.

Chief Deputy Director provided an update on legislative bills that CAC is tracking and that have had critical updates. It is important to note that the bills referenced below do not include proposed additional staffing resources for the agency for program development, implementation, and management:

- Senate Bill 1073 (SB 1073) introduced by Senator Smallwood-Cuevas. This bill would establish a voluntary tax contribution fund for the Black Cultural District in South Los Angeles. This bill would specifically focus on the recently designated cultural district within Senate District 28. As written, CAC would be required to administer the voluntary tax fund. The bill recently was heard by the Committee on Revenue and Taxation (Com. On REV. & TAX.) and was passed by the Com. on REV. & TAX, and then referred to Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports & Tourism (A., E., S., &T.). The Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports & Tourism will have a hearing on Tuesday, June 23, 2026 and has requested CAC Executive Director, Chief Deputy Director, and/or Deputy Director to be present



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to provide information about the current staffing resources of the agency and how it may be impacted by SB 1073 if passed.

- Assembly Bill 2541 (AB 2541) introduced by Assemblymember Mark González, who represents Assembly District 54 in Los Angeles. Coauthors include Assembly Members Alanis and Blanca Rubio, as well as Senators Caballero and Hurtado. This bill would establish the Lowrider License Plate Program, which includes creating and issuing a specialized license plate, known as Lowrider Plate. This bill would require the Arts Council to apply to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to sponsor “The Lowrider” specialized license plate, as specified. The bill would require the department, in consultation with the Arts Council, to design The Lowrider plate to reflect lowrider culture and heritage. The bill would require the department to work in consultation with the Department of the California Highway Patrol to determine whether the design obscures the readability of the license plate. The bill would require the Arts Council to use the fees imposed for the issuance, renewal, or transfer of these specialized license plates, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to fund projects that include, among others, supporting lowrider arts and cultural preservation efforts.

The bill was recently amended to include the following language and referred back to the Committee on Transportation for a second reading.

(A) The department and the Arts Council may consult with a nonprofit entity with a mission of supporting the lowrider community and Latino culture for plate design consultation, stakeholder engagement, publicity, and community outreach.

(B) The department and the Arts Council may accept and use donated artwork from California artists for purposes of this requirement.

(C) The department and the Arts Council may use funds from nonprofit or private sources to augment implementation.

*(C) Upon approval by the Arts Council, a nonprofit entity may assist in the review and administration of these grants. An entity that assists in the review and administration of these grants may request and qualify for a 4-percent to 6-percent administrative fee, inclusive.*



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CAC Chief Deputy Director also provided an update on Keep Arts in School (KAIS) voluntary tax contribution fund and the trailer bill language (TBL) submitted in the May Revision as a request to reauthorize KAIS. Chief Deputy Director and Deputy Director testified before Assembly Budget Subcommittee 5 on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, informing Subcommittee 5 on how KAIS supports arts in education for youth in California through CAC's local assistance grant programs and strategies for outreach and engagement to ensure the \$250K threshold is met going forward. Senate Budget Subcommittee 4 included the TBL as an "Items not for presentation," therefore CAC did not testify or present information to Subcommittee 4.

The Senate rejected the TBL "without prejudice and defer to the policy process." The Senate did not reject the intent of the TBL to reauthorize KAIS but deferred to the policy process instead of the budget process. The Assembly has not yet taken action on the TBL. If the Assembly also rejects the TBL, CAC will have to undertake the policy process to seek reauthorization of KAIS. CAC is actively communicating with the Department of Finance (DOF) on the status of KAIS. At this time, there is no further action.

The Committee also discuss the nexus with Prop 28, which added the Arts and Music in Schools – Funding Guarantee and Accountability Act to the California Education Code to provide a minimum source for annual funding to "supplement arts education programs" for pupils attending PK-12 public and charter schools. The Committee is interested in understanding current best practices with respect to Prop 28 and implementation at the local level but also understanding the gaps, and how CAC's arts in education programs may fill those gaps. If KAIS is not reauthorized, it may impact Council's programming and allocation decisions with respect to arts in education.

The 2024 Legislative budget package, Senate Bill 164, states that the KAIS voluntary tax contribution funds must meet a threshold of \$250K in the taxable year or become inoperative in the following year. For the taxable year of 2025, filers were unable to donate enough to the KAIS fund to meet the minimum threshold. This does not impact CAC's current annual budget; however long-term lack of contributions may lead to the loss of \$250K annually.

Furthermore, Chief Deputy Director provided a federal budget update. In May, the House Appropriations Committee approved legislation that would reduce NEA funding to \$135 million, a decrease of \$72 million from the agency's current funding level. While



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the proposal represents a significant cut, it is only one step in a lengthy appropriations process. The Senate has yet to release or consider its funding bill.

Per federal legislation, 40% of NEA's annual appropriation must be allocated to state arts agencies. CAC receives just over \$1M from the NEA which supports a portion of the agency's salaries, operational overhead, and local assistance funds for youth arts education grants. In the 2025-2026 federal budget similar cuts were proposed, but those cuts were unsuccessful.

CAC will continue to track and monitor state and federal legislation, engage with legislative offices to support the information and education of CAC's grant programming, and participate in discussions with state, federal, local partners, and advocacy groups.

**Report prepared by:** Chief Deputy Director Michelle Radmand in collaboration with the Legislative Committee

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**DATE:** Friday, June 26, 2026  
**TO:** All Council Members  
**FROM:** Equity Committee - Vicki Estrada and Roy Hirabayashi  
**RE:** Committee Activities

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**Purpose:** The purpose of this memo is to provide updates to the Council regarding developments in the Equity Committee's work for the June 26, 2026, meeting in Santa Cruz, CA.

**Background:** Per the Council [adopted bylaws](#), the Equity Committee shall ensure that grants invest in the evolving and diverse demographics of California. The committee defines equitable grant making as fair, accessible, inclusive and effectively serving to dismantle structural racism and other inequities.

**Activities:**

- The Committee has met Friday, January 23 and Tuesday, June 9, 2026.
- The Committee is reviewing a recent report launched collaboratively by the Public Health Institute, the State of Equity and the Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE) titled [Making Racial Equity Work Last: Organizing Lessons from California State Government](#). The work of the California Arts Council is reflected in this report as one of many state entity members of these organizations prioritizing equity in government.
- At a future Council meeting, the Committee suggests presenting some of the key relevant findings of the report in alignment with the work of the Equity Committee, the Council as a whole, its work with public funds and its support staff.
- The Equity Committee is currently focusing on the Equity Commitments embedded in the current agency Strategic Framework, which will expire in 2027.
- The Equity Committee has a goal of reviewing and presenting findings on the existing Equity Commitments in detail as a recap of the 2020-2027 existing Strategic Plan and Racial Equity Action Plan, and as part of its contribution towards preparing for the new Strategic Plan which will be developed over the course of the next year with an external consultant through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
- The Equity Committee are considered consulted Subject Matter Experts regarding an in-progress Equity Dashboard that Council support staff have been working on internally.

- The Equity Committee recommends a presentation overview of this dashboard at a future Council meeting as part of the transparency, tracking and progress of the agency's Equity Commitments and to prompt Council discussion.

**Timeline:**

Future committee meeting dates to be at least monthly and the following are anticipated discussion points for upcoming council meetings:

**June 26:** Provide committee memo on updates to Council.

**August 14:** Provide committee memo on updates to Council.

**September 2:** Provide committee memo on updates to Council.

**October 23:** Tentative date for presentation of findings/recap.

**December 11:** Tentative date for presentation of findings/recap.

**Report prepared by:** Race Equity Manager Megan Morgan, Equity Measures and Evaluation Manager Rebecca Ratzkin, and Program Manager Jonathan Estrada in collaboration with the Equity Committee



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**DATE:** June 26, 2026  
**TO:** All Council Members  
**FROM:** Ad Hoc Arts Awards Committee – Leah Goodwin and Alex Israel  
**RE:** Arts Awards Committee Update

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**Background & Purpose:** The Ad Hoc 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Arts Awards Committee was convened to steward the review and awards processes for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary arts awards. With this memo, the Committee is reporting on the outcomes of that process and initial conversations regarding the possibility of an annual arts awards initiative.

**50th Anniversary Awards Debrief:** The Committee met on Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> to debrief the arts awards process for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The overall sentiment was that the arts awards were a huge success, and that they were representative of a wide cross-section of arts leaders in terms of discipline, geography, and contribution to the arts and culture field. The Committee reflected that even amidst a very busy day of celebration, the awards occupied their own space in the festivities and were even more impactful for the recipients than anticipated.

**Initial Reflections on Annual Arts Awards Framework:** The Committee also discussed what an ongoing annual arts awards initiative might look like, both in terms of program design and logistics.

- **Program Design:** Since the overall outcomes of the awards process were so successful, the Committee recommends maintaining the fundamental structure of the nomination and adjudication process, including:
  - Continuing to solicit nominations from both Council members and State-Local Partners to continue to support geographic equity.
  - Maintain initial review by Committee and Executive Director to narrow nominations to 20.
  - Continue to make ten awards each year.

The Committee did reflect that the actual guidelines for the awards would benefit from revision in the following areas:

- Lifetime achievement: Make it clearer in the nomination guidelines that these are legacy awards for a lifetime commitment to and achievement in the arts.
- Individuals only: Limit nominations to individuals only since the vast majority of awards the CAC gives are to organizations.
- Focus on Artistic Merit: Rather than including Aesthetic Excellence as only one review criterion alongside Creative Vision and Community Engagement and Social Impact (as in the Individual Artists Fellowship Program), center artistic merit as the primary review criterion.
- **Logistics:** Much is still to be determined around the logistical parameters for the awards. However, the Committee discussed how the awards could happen in a more streamlined manner with little to no fundraising need:
  - Awards at Council Meeting: Rather than at a ceremony, the awards could be presented at a regular Council meeting.
  - Annually in April: In recognition of Arts and Culture month, the awards could be given at the April Council meeting in Sacramento.
  - In-person awards in Sacramento could facilitate the involvement of the Governor and the potential to have artists recognized on the floor of the Senate and Assembly.

**Committee Timeline:**

- August 2026: Discuss framework for 2027 Arts Awards
- October 2026: Vote on framework for 2027 Arts Awards

**Report Prepared: Josy Miller, Programs Manager, and Kristin Margolis, Director of Programs, in collaboration with the Ad Hoc Arts Awards Committee**