



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

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

**Friday, February 28, 2025
10 A.M. – 2:15 P.M.**

On Location/Virtual Hybrid Meeting

**Mexican Heritage Plaza - Gallery
1700 Alum Rock Avenue
San Jose, CA 95116**

**Online meeting access will be provided at:
<https://arts.ca.gov/about/council-meetings>**

**ASL Interpretation will be provided via Zoom.
Interpretación simultánea en español – transmisión de audio por Zoom.**

10:00 A.M.	1. Call to Order	R. Messina Captor
10:00 A.M. (3 min)	2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum	C. Gutierrez
10:03 A.M. (2 min)	3. Land and Peoples Acknowledgement	V. Estrada
10:05 A.M. (5 min)	4. Opening Remarks	R. Messina Captor
10:10 A.M. (10 min)	5. Welcome by Alexandra Urbanowski, CEO of SVCcreates; Ash Kalra, California State Assembly Member for District 25; Jessica Paz-Cedillos, Executive Director of The School of Arts & Culture	A. Urbanowski Asm. Kalra J. Paz-Cedillos
10:20 A.M. (10 min)	6. Chair’s Report (TAB K)	R. Messina Captor
10:30 A.M. (10 min)	7. Executive Director’s Report (TAB L)	D. Brazell

10:40 A.M. (5 min)	<p>8. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings (TAB M)</p> <p><i>Council will vote to approve the following minutes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Meeting – December 13, 2024, Hybrid • Council Meeting – January 24, 2025, Hybrid 	R. Messina Captor
10:45 A.M. (75 min)	<p>9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Program Guidelines Framework (TAB N)</p> <p><i>Council will vote to approve the FY 2025-2026 programs guideline framework.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation (15 min) • Public Comment (30 min) • Discussion (30 min) 	G. Clarke C. Duarte
12:00 P.M. (5 min)	10. PRESENTATION: Vicki Estrada	V. Estrada
12:05 P.M. (30 min)	WORKING LUNCH	
12:35 P.M. (10 min)	11. PRESENTATION: Roy Hirabayashi	R. Hirabayashi
12:45 P.M. (10 min)	12. DISCUSSION: California Arts Council's 50th Anniversary (TAB O)	R. Messina Captor N. Miner
12:55 P.M. (10 min)	<p>13. PRESENTATION: Los Angeles Region Wildfire Relief and Recovery</p> <p><i>Presentation by Kristin Sakoda, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture</i></p>	K. Sakoda
1:05 P.M. (10 min)	14. PRESENTATION: FY 2025-2026 Grant Programs Outreach Strategy (TAB P)	C. Gutierrez



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<p>1:15 P.M. (30 min)</p>	<p>15. General Public Comment</p> <p><i>Two forms of general public comment will be offered:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Comments will be accepted during the meeting in person or over Zoom.</i> 2) <i>Written comment submissions will also be accepted online prior to and up through 10 a.m. on the second business day following the close of the meeting.</i> <p><i>Live public comments will be limited to three minutes per person and 30 minutes in total, as allowed by Bagley-Keene.</i></p>	<p>C. Gutierrez</p>
<p>1:45 P.M. (15 min)</p>	<p>16. Council Open Discussion</p>	<p>R. Messina Captor</p>
<p>2:00 P.M. (5 min)</p>	<p>17. In Memoriam (TAB Q)</p>	<p>L. Goodwin</p>
<p>2:05 P.M. (5 min)</p>	<p>18. Closing Remarks</p> <p><i>Call for agenda items for the April 11, 2025 Council Meeting</i></p>	<p>R. Messina Captor</p>
<p>2:10 P.M.</p>	<p>19. Adjournment</p>	<p>R. Messina Captor</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 February 24 at 5 p.m. Please direct your request to the Public Affairs Specialist, Kimberly Brown, at kimberly.brown@arts.ca.gov.*
6. *Public comment instructions will be provided at <https://arts.ca.gov/about/council-meetings/>*
7. *Arts and cultural organizations or coalitions that wish to be scheduled on an upcoming agenda must submit a request to info@arts.ca.gov outlining a synopsis of their work and their purpose for inclusion at a Council meeting. All requests will be sent to the Council Chair for consideration and may or may not be accepted and subsequently scheduled.*

TAB K

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025



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2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento CA 95833
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DATE: February 28, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: Roxanne Messina Captor, Chair
RE: Chair's Report

Amid the many changes in our state, I want to speak about some potential good news. Thanks to the CA Advocates of the Arts, Julie Baker, CEO, and certain state Assembly people and Senators there is an initiative to restore the CAC'S budget back to its original. Therefore the \$5M that was lost in 24 would be restored in 25. I want to make it clear this is NOT a fait complete.

This movement is under way and there is serious support on this matter. We also need to acknowledge the pressure on the state budget currently. With money going to restore LA neighborhoods after the fires, the Governor's wish to increase the film tax incentives and our ask, we recognize this is an intense time for the legislature to balance all the above. We at the CAC would like to turn to our mission statement:

[Mission](#)

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

[Vision](#)

A California where all people flourish with universal access to and participation in the arts.

Our By-Laws 8750 state

“The Legislature perceives that life in California is enriched by art.

The source of art is in the natural flow of the human mind. Realizing craft and beauty is demanding, however, the people of the state desire to encourage and nourish these skills wherever they occur, to the benefit of all.”

To really fulfill this mission, vision and by-laws to support and honor all art organizations and artists throughout the state we need to have a budget equal to the size of our state. Many have spoken before that CAC’S budget is less than smaller states. Restoring our \$5M is a great start. One that we implore the Governor and the legislature to support.

As Co-Chairs Nicola Miner and I look to leading our 50th anniversary in 2026, I thought it was important to turn to some of our core values. You have heard our mission statement and vision, support for ALL arts organizations and artists statewide.

Council members as an appointees are volunteers and receive an honorarium. They are considered a state employees and as such serve to extend the mission of the Executive and Legislative branches of the State of California. Council should devote his or her full time, attention, and efforts to his or her state office or employment. Looking at the following:

The Council convenes no more than 8 times per year. Members are expected to attend all meetings.

Declaration of Conflict of Interests

Council members are expected to complete a declaration of interest form each June and to declare any conflict of interest at the start of committee meetings and Council voting items and to withdraw from the ensuing discussions and/or vote, if/when appropriate.

Members are provided a Council Book that accompanies the meeting agenda prior to the meeting. Members are expected to have read all materials within the Council book in advance of the meeting. The Council Chair is available to answer questions that may arise as you prepare for the Council meeting.

Participation in Standing Committees

Council members will be assigned to at least one standing committee by the Council Chair. Members’ preference will be considered but the Council Chair will ensure sufficient Council representation on each committee.

The Council Shall:

- a) Encourage artistic awareness, participation and expression.
- b) Help independent local groups develop their own art programs.
- c) Promote the employment of artists and those skilled in crafts in both the public and private sector.
- d) Enlist the aid of all state agencies in the task of ensuring the fullest expression of our artistic potential.
- e) Adopt regulations in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act necessary for proper execution of the powers and duties granted to the council by this chapter.
- f) Employ such administrative, technical, and other personnel as may be necessary.
- g) Fix the salaries of the personnel employed pursuant to this chapter which salaries shall be fixed as nearly as possible to conform to the salaries established by the State Personnel Board for classes of positions in the state civil service involving comparable duties and responsibilities.

Chair:

- Presides at Council meetings and activities and uses Robert's Rules of Order as the basis to conduct Council meetings.
- May call a Special Meeting as permitted by Government Code Section 11125.4.
- Establishes and upholds decorum to foster and facilitate discussion during council meetings.
- Serves, in partnership with the Vice Chair and Director, to lead the Council and set agendas for Council meetings.
- Assigns committee roles for all Council members in consultation with the members and outlines recommended assignments for the year.
- Establishes and maintains working relationships with the Governor and staff, Senate President pro Tempore, Assembly Speaker, and other stakeholders.
- Obtains authorization of the Council as a whole, before committing the Council to any action outside of those approved with votes.
- The Council Chair serves as the spokesperson for the Council body. All public and media inquiries received by an individual Council member must be forwarded to the Chair along with the agency's Public Affairs team for an official response. All official responses will be supported by the Public Affairs team.

Executive Director:

The council may delegate to the director the responsibilities for carrying out council policy. The director shall assist the council in the carrying out of its work, be responsible for the hiring of council staff, including, but not limited to, deputy directors, be responsible for the management and administration of the council staff, and perform other duties as directed by the council.

- Works in cooperation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council.
- Responsible for the management and administration of the agency staff and the implementation of Council policy.
- Assigns staff to all Council committees.
- Implements Council approved policies and develops operational policies.
- Must act in compliance with the “Incompatibility Statement” in California Government

TAB L

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025



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DATE: February 28, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: Danielle Brazell, Executive Director
RE: ED Report

Introduction

I'm pleased to share key updates and highlights reflecting the California Arts Council's ongoing commitment to advancing the arts as a force for connection, equity, and transformation across the state. This report provides critical updates on current programs, emergent issues, and other updates reflecting the agency's progress in advancing our mission through the Strategic Framework adopted by Council in 2019.

FIELD UPDATES AND ENGAGEMENT

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

The new guidelines released by the NEA are in alignment with the President's Executive Order banning all federal funding to support any program or organization that has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion focus. The NEA funds hundreds of arts organizations across the state annually totaling approximately \$6M.

Early this month, the NEA launched Grants for Arts Projects and held a webinar – to apply, organizations must check a box stating compliance assurance with all current Exec Orders, specifically to not operate any programs promoting DEI, that violate any law and will not promote gender ideology.

Program Specialists are receiving many questions from the field, specifically how to align with the CAC's commitment to centering equity when the NEA is not.

The NEA is the largest public funder of the arts and arts education in the United States. Its mandate is to make the arts accessible to all Americans. Its goals are as follows:

- Provide equitable opportunities for all Americans to participate in the arts

- Create an environment where the arts benefit everyone
- Support excellence in the arts, both new and established
- Provide leadership in arts education

In addition, the NEA funds arts organizations and artists in every congressional district

A significant percentage of grants go to those who have fewer opportunities to participate in the arts

Activities

- Researching the value and importance of the arts
- Funding grants for arts projects
- Funding challenge America grants for projects reaching underserved communities
- Funding creative placemaking grants for programs integrating arts, culture, and design activities into community projects

LA Fires

Agency staff remain in active communication with our local partners in the region, including the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture State and Local Partner (SLP) as well as other local arts agencies (City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Pasadena Department of Arts and Culture, City of Santa Monica Division of Arts and Culture among others) regularly to support their short-term response, and lay the groundwork for recovery efforts.

Additionally, Executive Director Brazell was named a member of the Los Angeles Office of Emergency Management's newly formed Cultural and Natural Resources Task Force.

Program Manager, Josy Miller participated in the Arts Community Collective Impact Initiative Meeting – Modesto, CA - February 18, 2025, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM. Convened by the Stanislaus Arts Council, the gathering brought leaders from the county to develop messaging and inspire collective action among participants.

Director of Programs Kristin Margolis met with museum directors and senior-level managers at the annual Director's Dinner on February 19, 2025. The evening featured a special program, *State of the State: Museums, Funding, and Other Questions*, with CAM's Executive Director Jennifer Caballero in conversation with Kristin Margolis. The conversation provided key insights into museum funding and statewide arts initiatives, highlighting critical issues and opportunities within the sector.

PROGRAMS PROCESS UPDATES

FY 25-26 Grant Cycle – Presentation

Effective implementation of public programs requires well-defined policies, clear objectives, and a structured, time-bound execution plan. In alignment with Council's adoption of the Program Policy Committee's recommendations on January 24, 2025, the FY25-26 Grant Cycle is undergoing revisions to reflect this new strategic direction.

Staff has worked collaboratively to refine the grant cycle, ensuring alignment with Council priorities by integrating key components such as evaluation frameworks, equity measures, panelist recruitment and training, marketing and outreach strategies, technical assistance, and funding recommendations.

California Native American and Indigenous Artists Grant Program

The Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking a consultant to help the CAC prioritize the needs of Native American artists across California closed on February 17, 2025. Staff is currently auditing the applications to ensure they meet the criteria outlined in the RFP before a review panel is convened to review, select finalists and conduct interviews before final selection.

FY2025-26 Cultural District Designation

The California Arts Council (CAC) is responsible for the certification and support of state-designated cultural districts. Fourteen (14) initial districts were selected in 2017 through a competitive application process.

The CAC's statutory requirement to designate districts, and statutory allowance to provide funding from a variety of sources was established in 2015 (AB 189). Specifically, statute requires CAC to establish criteria/guidelines, a competitive application process, and provide technical assistance for designated cultural districts. It further allows CAC latitude to fund the program through gifts, donations, grants or other revenue from public or private sources, and expend those funds upon appropriation by the Legislature, for the cultural districts program or any other purpose it deems necessary to implement this chapter.

In December 2024, Council approved \$100,000 from the Local Assistance budget to designate up to ten additional Cultural Districts. An external consultant was hired in 2018 to develop a GAP analysis of the program to help inform the next round of designations. Staff will now convene the Programs Policy Committee to develop a guideline framework for the next round of applications. Our goal is to present this framework to Council in April for discussion followed by a final vote in June. Release the guidelines in July and conduct site visits in October and November to have the next round of Cultural Districts awarded in December 2025.

AGENCY UPDATES & UPCOMING EVENTS

FY24-25 Grant Cycle Payments

- CAC is on track to meet its goal of having all grantee payments completed by March 31, 2025.
- All 21 contracts for the Arts in Corrections program have been fully executed. Programming in all 33 State adult correctional facilities is now underway.

Panelist Recruitment Underway

Robust outreach is currently underway to recruit peer panelists to review the FY25-26 grant applications. Public Affairs and the Grants Program team are working collaboratively to ensure the CAC recruits panelists in communities with the lowest HPI quadrants to support the goals outlined by Council for the 2025-26 grant cycle. Applications for the panel pool are due March 18th.

20th Anniversary of Poetry Out Loud – Sacramento, CA - March 16 & 17, 2025

2025 Poetry Out Loud County Competitions – All county-level Poetry Out Loud competitions have concluded, with participation from 235 schools, 17,311 students, and 416 teachers. County champions will gather in Sacramento from March 16-17 for the statewide competition, where they will also have the opportunity to meet with their legislators.

Creative Economy Workgroup Meeting – Sacramento, CA February 19 & 20, 2025

The third Creative Economy Workgroup meeting met at Miss Tee's Innovation Factory in Sacramento on February 19 & 20, 2025. The working group developed recommendations and strategies to meet the goals outlined in the [authorizing legislation](#). Many thanks to Chair Messina-Captor, Vice Chair Goodwin, and Council members Hirabayashi and Keehn for their service on this important legislatively mandated working group.

Closing

As the Council begins to develop plans to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the CAC, the agency and its dedicated staff will continue to bolster partnerships with the field and with non-arts statewide agencies to create a more resilient, creative, and inclusive California.

The agency and its dedicated staff are fervently committed to being a responsive, resilient, effective, and mission-centered agency that meets the region's diverse arts and cultural ecology needs. On behalf of the entire CAC team, I thank the Council for your stewardship, thoughtful policy-setting, and enduring commitment to California's arts ecosystem. Together, we will continue to build a future where every community thrives through creativity and cultural expression.

2025-2026 Grants Cycle Strategy, Timeline & Roles

Danielle Brazell | Executive Director | danielle.Brazell@arts.ca.gov



DEFINE PROGRAM POLICY GOALS AND PROGRAMS

The Council discusses funding priorities, public comment is solicited, direction is provided to Council committees.

*based on the evaluation of previous programs

DESIGN GUIDELINE FRAMEWORK AND APPLICATIONS

Staff develop full program guidelines, outreach strategies based on Council decision, and public comment. Framework highlights the priorities set forth by the Council.

EVALUATE PROGRAM CYCLES

Data is collected continuously across different phases. Evaluation is ongoing and integrates previous granting cycles. Grantee reports are due in the fall.

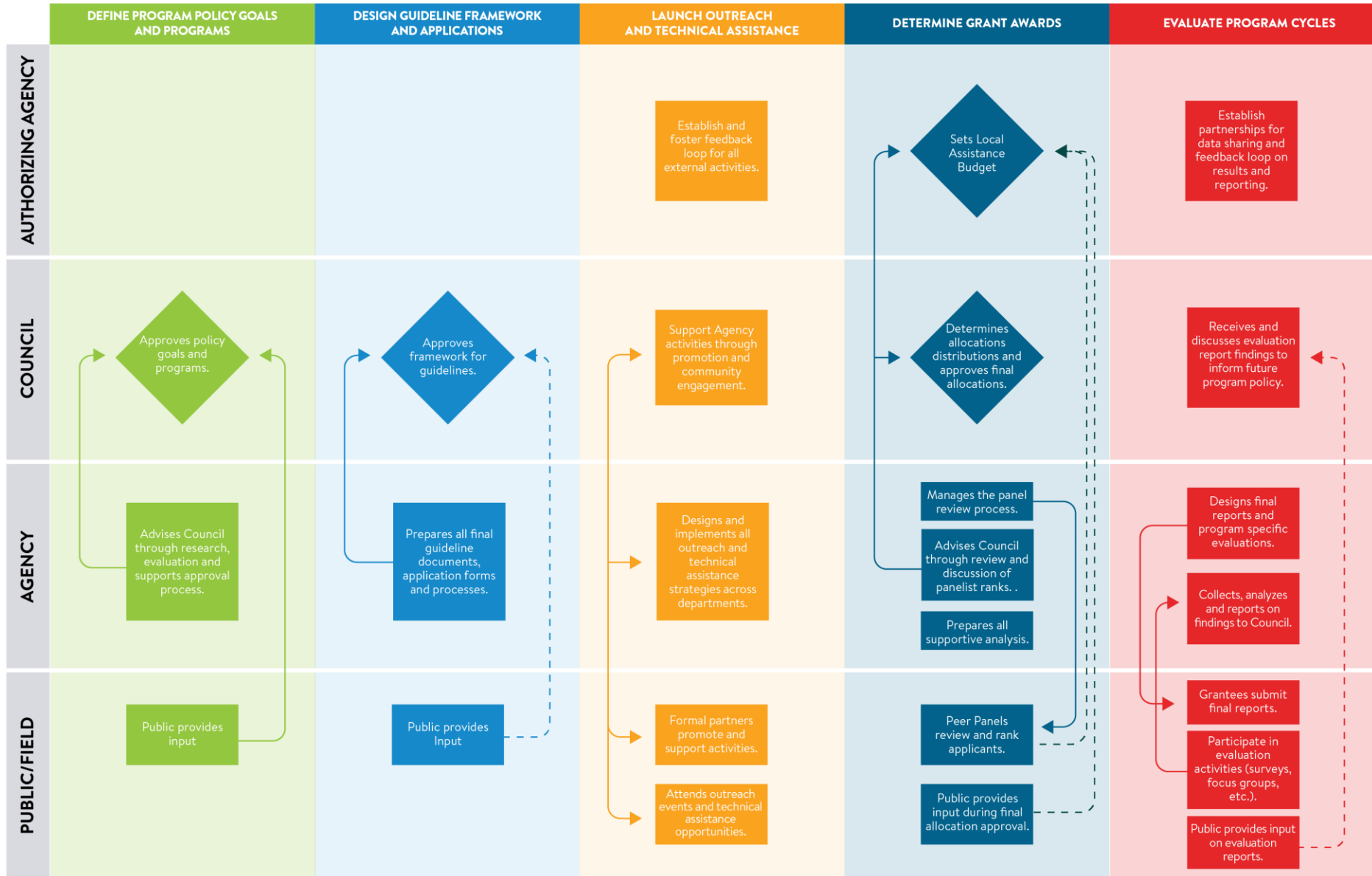
DETERMINE GRANT AWARDS

Applications are processed by staff. Panelists review and rank applications. Rankings are provided to Council with funding recommendations from Council committees for a vote at public meeting.

LAUNCH OUTREACH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Staff prepares and publishes grant guidelines and applications for the public. Staff conducts outreach and promotion and provides technical assistance to applicants.







Thanks!

Any questions?

TAB M

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025

**Minutes of Public Meeting
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL
Friday, December 13, 2024
10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.
On Location/Virtual Hybrid Meeting
Bowers Museum
2002 N Main St
Santa Ana, CA 92706**

The members of the California Arts Council convened in Los Angeles 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 Gerald Clarke
Council Member Vicki Estrada
Council Member Roy Hirabayashi
Council Member Dorka Keehn
Council Member Phil Mercado
Council Member Nicola Miner
Council Member Alex Israel
Council Member Olivia Raynor

Council Members Present Remotely:

Council Member Caleb Duarte
Council Vice Chair Leah Goodwin

Council Members Absent:

n/a

Arts Council Staff Present:

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director
Michelle Radmand, Chief Deputy Director
Carissa Gutierrez, Public Affairs Director
Kimberly Brown, Public Affairs Specialist
Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures & Evaluation Manager
Zachary Hill, IT Associate
Steve Mok, Graphic Designer

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Public Affairs Director called the roll and established a quorum, with all 11 council members present (9 in person, 2 virtual).

3. Land and People's Acknowledgement

Council Member Dorka Keehn read the California Arts Council's Land and People's Acknowledgement.

4. Opening Remarks

Chair Messina Captor Messina Captor welcomed the attendees and acknowledged the interpreters in the room including Paula DiMuro and Daniel Swartz (ASL), Darlene Rochella (captioner), Jeanette Hernandez and Aldo Renteria (Spanish/English simultaneous translation).

5. Welcome from Mayor Valerie Amezcuca, City of Santa Ana and Rick Stein, President & CEO of CAC State-Local Partner, Arts Orange County

Representative J Luis Correa and Orange County Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento offered welcome remarks. Assembly Member Sharon Quirk-Silva (later in the meeting) and Senator Tom Umberg (during the working lunch) also attended the meeting. Mayor Amezcuca was unable to attend.

6. Chair Messina Captor's Report

Chair Messina Captor presented a reflective end-of-year report highlighting the accomplishments and challenges of 2024. The Chair acknowledged the busy and sometimes stressful nature of the season but emphasized the importance of gratitude and community.

The report noted significant events of the year, including leadership changes, budget cuts, and initiatives like the Creative Economy Workgroup. Despite the challenges, the Council demonstrated resilience, with both the Council and the public addressing budget constraints and implementing positive changes. The Chair commended the Council's committee work, which has led to meaningful revisions benefiting the CAC, its grantees, and partners, setting the stage for continued progress in 2025.

The Chair reflected on the importance of collective efforts to protect the arts and support those dedicated to bringing creativity and joy to the community. She expressed pride in serving as Chair during a year of both trials and triumphs and in the progress made toward the upcoming 50th anniversary. The Chair called for continued unity and commitment to fostering a sustainable future, thanking the CAC's partners and grantees for their unwavering support and belief in the organization's mission.

7. Executive Director's Report

The Executive Director delivered [her report](#), beginning with an expression of gratitude to the nonprofit sector for its critical partnership in advancing CAC's mission. She emphasized that government efforts alone cannot meet the needs of the communities served, and the nonprofit field plays an essential role in making a meaningful impact. Reflecting on her journey, the Executive Director shared her personal connection to the work of the Council, recounting her experiences as a practicing artist who once relied on CAC programs. She credited those experiences with shaping her perspective and expressed heartfelt thanks to Mr. Wayne Cook, a longstanding contributor to the agency and a mentor in her career.

The Director reiterated CAC's commitment to listening and learning from the field. She encouraged Council members to review public comments and actively participate in the robust discussions ahead, as the meeting would include critical decisions to align with CAC's strategic framework and values within the constraints of limited resources. Highlights from the Director's report included updates on key programs:

- The **Arts and Corrections** initiative now includes 21 selected providers who will carry forward this important work.
- A new **California Native American and Indigenous Artists Grant Program** is in development. An open RFP invites consultants to collaborate with the Native artist community, with proposals due February 11. To support this process, two informational webinars are scheduled for January 11 and 13.
- The team successfully processed 806 grant applications, ensuring that contracts are signed and queued for fiscal payment. The Director commended staff for their extraordinary teamwork in meeting this commitment to the field.

Looking to the future, the Director announced preparations for CAC's upcoming 50th anniversary in 2026, noting that efforts in the coming year would focus on laying the foundation for this milestone. She also shared plans to embark on a new strategic framework to ensure the agency's work remains deeply aligned with its mission and values.

Director Brazell concluded her remarks by expressing gratitude to the field, the Council, and the CAC team. She reflected on her first year as Executive Director, describing it as an incredible honor and privilege to serve in this capacity.

8. DISCUSSION ITEM: Community Agreements

Vice Chair Goodwin facilitated a discussion around revising the current slate of community agreements for the Council. These [revised agreements](#) were presented to the council for unanimous consent.

There were no objections by the Council thus the community agreements were approved and adopted.

9. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings

Chair Messina Captor Messina-Captor presented the council meeting minutes for November 22nd to the Council for unanimous consent.

There were no objections noted by the Council thus the minutes were approved.

10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

The California Arts Council (CAC) Programs Policy Committee presented its proposed grant programs for fiscal year 25-26, emphasizing equity, accessibility, and streamlined processes to serve priority populations. Seven programs were recommended, including General Operating Support, a consolidated Project-Based Grant, Individual Artist Fellowships, Folk and Traditional Arts, and a Pilot Micro-Grant Program to aid small organizations.

The committee highlighted alignment with CAC's 2019-2027 Strategic Framework, prioritizing underserved regions, individuals with disabilities, and those with limited resources.

Discussions underscored the importance of equity, public feedback, and data-driven program evaluation. Interim and final reports will monitor success, with guidelines focusing on clarity and priority population eligibility. The committee committed to adaptability, emphasizing the role of council and public input in finalizing plans. The Chair commended the committee's efforts, noting the challenges ahead in balancing program consolidation with equitable access and effectiveness.

Council Member Estrada motioned and Council Member Israel seconded the Committee's recommendation.

PUBLIC COMMENT (listed at the end of the minutes)

At the California Arts Council meeting, Assembly Member Sharon Quirk-Silva was introduced and delivered a heartfelt speech about the vital role of the arts in education and community. Representing North Orange County and parts of Los Angeles, she highlighted her longstanding belief in the importance of arts education, particularly for vulnerable students. As the Budget Chair of Subcommittee 5, she shared her support for restoring funding to the California Arts Council (CAC) and praised the resilience of the arts, especially post-pandemic, noting that the arts were "the light" during challenging times.

The meeting then shifted to a discussion on the proposed consolidation of seven grant programs for 2025. The Programs Committee outlined the new structure, which includes programs like General Operating Support, Project-Based Grants, and Individual Artist Fellowships.

Council Member Estrada noted the importance of considering public comments and potentially revising the recommendations. Council Member Clarke supported the motion but acknowledged the concerns, suggesting that these could be addressed in the program guidelines. Vice Chair Goodwin voiced concern regarding the impact of consolidation on SRNs and arts education and stressed the importance of technical assistance and public input.

Discussions also focused on specific programs like the Folk and Traditional Arts Program, which serves communities with limited cultural infrastructure. Executive Director Brazell clarified that intermediary organizations manage this program to reach underserved populations. The council also discussed the potential for integrating folk and traditional arts more broadly within the overall funding structure, though concerns about losing the program's unique identity remained.

As the meeting continued, procedural clarifications were made about how to address the motion. Parliamentarian David Mazzer outlined several options, including amending, substituting, or dividing the question for separate votes on individual program elements. The Parliamentarian also offered the option of superseding the active motion of the committee's memo with the new motion to move this agenda item to the January council meeting.

Staff emphasized that if the motion failed, the Programs Policy Committee would revisit the recommendations and bring revisions to the January 24th meeting. Council Member Estrada rescinded the initial motion.

The Chair stated that the motion on the floor is to postpone the active motion noted in the Programs Policy memo to January 24, which was motioned by Council Member Estrada, seconded by Councilmember Israel. The Chair called for the vote. Chair Messina Captor, Vice Chair Goodwin, Council Members Duarte, Estrada, Hirabayashi, Israel, Mercado, Miner voted in favor. Council Member Clarke, Keehn and Raynor voted against postponing. The motion passed. The motion put forth in the Programs Policy memo to open specific programs for 2025 was postponed to the January council meeting.

11. VOTING ITEM: Council Attendance Procedure

At the California Arts Council meeting, the Governance Committee presented a proposal to revise the council's bylaws regarding attendance at council meetings. The recommendation included the requirement that council members attend meetings in person. Should members needed to participate remotely, they must notify both the Chair and the Executive Director at least 30 days in advance. This advance notice would ensure that a quorum could be established and help the staff with logistical planning.

Additionally, Executive Director Brazell highlighted that losing quorum could prevent the council from accomplishing its mandated policy requirements.

Council Member Raynor noted the possibility of future council members, especially those with disabilities or health conditions, not being able to attend in person. The Executive Director reassured the group that the Bagley-Keene Act already provides provisions for such accommodations, allowing remote participation when necessary. This was important to ensure inclusivity and prevent any council member from being excluded due to health reasons.

After considering all points, the Chair called the question. Council Member Estrada reiterated the committee's recommendation as a motion to approve the changes to the bylaws, which was seconded by Council Member Israel. The motion passed unanimously, with all members voting in favor.

This revision to the bylaws will now include the notification requirement for remote participation, ensuring better coordination and communication for future meetings.

12:15-12:45 WORKING LUNCH

12. VOTING ITEM: Council Elections

Council Member Miner presided over the nomination process and explained the procedure. In November, the council had reviewed the election process and received electronic nominations.

For the position of Chair, Roxanna Messina Captor was nominated, and for Vice Chair, Leah Goodwin was nominated. Council Member Miner opened the floor for any further nominations and no additional nominations were received. The council proceeded with a vote by acclamation.

The roll call vote for Chair was held, and each member unanimously voted in favor of Roxanna Messina Captor as Chair for 2025. Similarly, the roll call vote for Vice Chair was held, with unanimous consent for Leah Goodwin.

The council congratulated Roxanna Messina Captor as Chair and Leah Goodwin as Vice Chair for the California Arts Council in 2025.

13. VOTING ITEM: Partnership Committee Recommendations

The Partnership Committee, led by Councilmembers Goodwin and Mercado, presented their recommendations to the council. This ad hoc committee was established to expand the California Arts Council's influence by building alliances and partnerships with other statewide agencies and coalitions in areas of mutual interest.

Councilmember Mercado provided background on the committee's purpose and work, noting that the committee had met several times to discuss priorities and potential new partnerships. The committee agreed on the purpose of developing and maintaining partnerships with other state agencies to build a strong base of support for the California Arts Council within state government. However, the committee revised its charter to remove fundraising as a focus, aligning the committee's mission with its new goal of expanding arts, culture, and creativity in California through effective partnerships.

The committee also developed a rubric, available for review in the memo, to guide this partnership-building process. They expressed openness to additional partnership suggestions from council members, staff, and the public.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received in person or online.

DISCUSSION

Councilmember Estrada inquired about the next steps following the vote on the goals and framework presented by the Partnership Committee. The committee explained that once the vote is passed, an implementation plan would be developed and integrated into the agency's core functions.

Vice Chair Goodwin added that fostering open relationships with partners could lead to expanded visibility and collaboration, particularly in arts-related initiatives like Arts in CA Parks.

The discussion also touched upon the potential for fundraising, which had initially been considered unfeasible. However, the Appointments Secretary confirmed that fundraising is an option, prompting the council to reconsider this aspect. Councilmember Mercado emphasized the importance of sponsorships rather than direct fundraising to avoid competition with the arts and cultural sector.

Councilmember Raynor shared an example of a successful past partnership with the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, which highlighted the importance of collaboration with underrepresented groups and state agencies.

Councilmember Estrada then moved to approve the recommendations of the Partnership Committee with the modification to include Caltrans in place of Clean California, considering Clean California's upcoming conclusion. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Raynor and the committee proceeded to vote on the recommendations. The motion passed unanimously.

14. VOTING ITEM: 2025 Council Meeting Dates and Locations

The council discussed the proposed dates and locations for their meetings in 2025. As outlined in voting item #11 of this agenda, Council members are expected to be present for all of its public meetings unless extenuating circumstances arise.

Councilmember Clark raised a point about ensuring that meetings are held in accessible locations but also recommended that tribal community centers and complexes be considered as venues to honor the council's responsibility to indigenous peoples. The council acknowledged this and agreed to consider it when selecting venues for future meetings.

The proposed dates and locations, which included several cities across California, were referenced and included in the council book. Chair Messina Captor also read out each date and proposed location. The motion to approve the schedule was made by Chair Messina Captor and seconded by Councilmember Mercado. The motion passed unanimously, confirming the following meeting dates and locations for 2025:

- January 24th, Yuba /Sutter Region
- February 28th, San Jose
- April 11th, Pasadena
- June 20th, San Diego
- September 26th, San Francisco
- October 24th, San Bernardino
- December 12th, Central Valley

The dates and locations for the 2025 Council Meetings were officially set.

15. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment

All public comment listed at the end of these minutes.

16. Council Open Discussion

Item 16 opened for open discussion, allowing council members to address any specific topics they wished to discuss. The Chair referenced previous mentions of the Strategic Framework memo and the Equity memo and invited members to report out on their work at this time.

Equity Committee Report

Council Member Estrada introduced the Equity Committee's update. The committee is charged with finalizing equity language recommendations for grant guidelines and the equity statement.

A key recommendation from the committee was to revisit training for all council members to better understand and align around equity guidelines and statements. Councilmember Goodwin emphasized the importance of ensuring that accessibility remains a critical part of the committee's work and future equity definitions.

Strategic Framework Committee Report

Council Member Hirabayashi provided an update on the Strategic Framework Committee. The committee is tasked with reviewing the Decision Support Tool (DST) and assessing whether any refinements or simplifications are needed. While no major revisions are being recommended at this time, the committee is working to support the Council's use of the DST by developing a Pre-DST worksheet.

The committee finalized this document on December 4th, and it will be presented to the Council at an upcoming meeting (either in January or February). The intent is to simplify and clarify the process, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of the DST.

Chair Messina Captor then invited all council members to discuss any matters of interest. A council member raised the topic of committee terms, suggesting that committee terms should extend beyond one year to allow for greater continuity.

50th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee

The Chair shared plans for the formation of an ad hoc committee focused on the upcoming 50th anniversary of the California Arts Council. This committee will play an important role in developing a plan, but it will be the full Council's input and decisions that will shape the event. Council members were encouraged to contribute ideas, particularly regarding awards and sponsorships, which were highlighted as crucial to the success of the 50th anniversary.

Council Member Presentations

The Chair introduced an idea to address the issue that some council members feel they don't know their colleagues well. The proposal was to allow council members to present themselves and their work at future meetings. This would help to build understanding among members and provide insight into their diverse backgrounds. Each presentation would be limited to three minutes to keep it concise and engaging. Members were invited to email the Chair if they were interested in participating.

Chair Messina Captor concluded with a reminder to send emails expressing interest in presenting, and a call for any further discussion from council members.

17. In Memoriam

Vice Chair Leah Goodwin led a moment of remembrance for several influential figures in the arts who passed away over the past year. Below is the list of individuals honored:

- **Paul Caponegro (November 10):** American photographer, known for his landscape photography, passed away at 91.
- **Roy Haynes (November 12):** American jazz drummer who played with legendary musicians like Charlie Parker and Chick Corea, passed away at 99.
- **Robert Cohen (November 15):** Professor of Drama Emeritus at UC Irvine and a transformative figure in theater education, passed away at 86.
- **Alice Rock (November 21):** American restaurateur and artist, the inspiration behind Arlo Guthrie's song "Alice's Restaurant," passed away at 83.
- **Helen Gallagher (November 24):** Emmy and Tony Award-winning singer, dancer, and actress, known for her roles in *No, No Nanette* and *Ryan's Hope*, passed away at 98.
- **Earl Hollyman (November 25):** American actor and pop singer, known for roles in *The Rainmaker* and *Policewomen*, passed away at 96.
- **Jim Abrams (November 26):** American comedy screenwriter and director, known for films like *Airplane!* and *The Naked Gun*, passed away at 80.
- **Michael North (November 27):** San Diego photographer and historical documenter, passed away at 77.
- **Marshall Brickman (November 29):** Academy Award-winning screenwriter, known for works with Woody Allen, including *Annie Hall*, passed away at 85.
- **Wayne Northworth (November 29):** American actor known for *Days of Our Lives*, passed away at 77.
- **Martin Benson (November 29):** Co-founder and co-artistic director of South Coast Repertory, passed away at 87.
- **Angela Alvarez (December 6):** Cuban American Latin jazz singer-songwriter, Latin Grammy Award winner, passed away at 95.
- **Janet Hilbert (December 9):** Co-founder of the Hilbert Museum of California Art, passed away.
- **Yolanda Nikki Giovanni (December 9):** American poet, civil rights activist, and educator, passed away at 81.

The Vice Chair's words concluded with a poetic tribute to Nikki Giovanni, describing her passing as "just like cotton candy on a rainy day... she faded away."

18. Announcement

Council Member Raynor made a heartfelt announcement regarding her decision to step down from the Arts Council for personal reasons. She shared her reflections on her experiences and the critical role the council plays in shaping the arts in California. Raynor expressed her passion for making the arts more accessible and equitable for every Californian, a belief that guided her work on the council. She highlighted her pride in how the council used modest funds to support the arts, foster relationships, and champion the importance of accessibility.

Despite her departure, Raynor reiterated her ongoing commitment to advocating for accessibility and supporting artists with disabilities, vowing to continue her work in these

areas. She expressed confidence in the council's ability to build on its successes to foster inclusion, equity, and creativity across California.

In closing, Raynor shared that the arts are not only a reflection of who we are but also a vision of who we can become, thanking the council for the privilege of serving alongside them.

The Chair thanked Council Member Raynor for her service, acknowledging that she would be greatly missed but understanding her decision. The Chair expressed deep appreciation for Reynor's contributions to the council and her lasting impact on the arts in California.

19. Closing Remarks

The Chair expressed concern and solidarity with the artists in the Malibu area who have faced devastating challenges due to recent disasters. Many homes were destroyed, and access to the outside world was completely cut off due to closures of major roads like Pacific Coast Highway and Topanga. Despite these hardships, the Chair acknowledged the exceptional efforts of the firefighters who saved many homes, people, and animals, particularly at the ranches in the area. The Chair extended support to these artists, recognizing the difficult circumstances, but expressed confidence that they would continue creating incredible work.

The Chair also reminded council members to submit any agenda items for the upcoming January 24th meeting by emailing either the Chair or Danielle and assured that the executive committee would review these items for inclusion in the agenda. The Chair encouraged council members to consider and send their items via email before the meeting.

In closing, the Chair wished everyone happy holidays. The Chair ended the meeting with a warm farewell and noted that the California Arts Council would return in the New Year, ready for new developments in 2025.

20. Adjournment

Chair Messina Captor adjourned at 2:22 PM at the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana, with a final expression of holiday wishes.

CAC PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSIONS COUNCIL MEETING December 13, 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah Weber, Executive Director, Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO)

"Good morning. My name is Sarah Weber. I'm the Executive Director of the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, or ACSO. ACSO is an SRN grant recipient and a service organization that supports hundreds of orchestras and music organizations, and the thousands of people who work for them around the state. I speak today on behalf of ACSO and also as part of a coalition of over 30 SRNs from around the state to urge the Council not to consolidate the SRN program under general operating support, but to keep it as a distinct program.

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.

The CAC strategic framework prioritizes capacity building and geographic equity for the field. SRNs are a partner to you in that work, as our missions are to strengthen and build the constituents we serve, and we represent every corner of the state. We support the Council's goal of simplifying the grant program. To that end, earlier this year, the SRN Coalition presented CAC staff with a list of recommendations on how to streamline the SRN program, and we would like to be able to present those to the Council.

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. If the proposal passes as is—which I hope it does not—we urge you to consult with the coalition before revising the GenOps program guidelines. Thank you."

Alicia Rojas, Artist and Former Fellowship Recipient

"Buenos dias! Good morning, everybody! Welcome to Santa Ana, my city! Thank you for having you here.

I wanted to speak in support of the Individual Fellowships. I was one of the recipients of the inaugural grant in 2020–2021 as the established artist, which helped me tremendously in continuing to build my portfolio, and it was a catalyst for me receiving the Create a Corps grant through 18th Street Arts Center, which is the book that you will be gifted today—and thank you to Supervisor Sarmiento for his amazing words on my project.

Putting hands and money directly into the artists and in our communities is so important, especially in communities like Santa Ana. And when you get to see the book, you will see these amazing oral histories of 63 women who are first responders, American heroes of the pandemic, who would be otherwise unseen.

The public art project also has a monument in the Latino Health Access building—a sculpture to brown women. So this Individual Artist Fellowship was a seed for me to begin this type of work. So thank you so much for encouraging the California Arts Council to continue these grants for other artists in our communities, and I hope you enjoy the book. Thank you."

Sean Avejas, Youth Program Leader

"Hello! I'm bad at public speaking, so I'm going to be buried here in my notes. Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Sean Avejas, and for the past two years, I've been running a program that brings mobile recording studios and cameras into youth detention facilities. This gives kids the chance to write, record, and produce their own music while also learning audio engineering, podcasting, and filmmaking.

In that time, I've seen some pretty radical transformations. Kids who once told me they wanted to be gangbangers their whole lives now talk about becoming songwriters, producers, filmmakers, and podcasters. The officers have also expressed their gratitude for the opportunities we provide, noting that the program has brought huge positive impacts. In fact, there hasn't been a single fight on a music day since we started—an incredible benefit for everyone in the facility. As our program therapist shared, this program provides hope and vision for life beyond detention. Emotional regulation, self-esteem, and teamwork have all improved dramatically.

We're also focused on heavy data collection, working with a licensed therapist to track emotional growth, well-being, and teamwork. Our goal is to create a model replicated across California, bringing this impact to more youth.

We're grateful for the funding we have received from the Arts Council, but the demand is growing. We're currently in three facilities, but five more are ready to launch. These programs reduce violence, improve learning, and give kids tools to imagine a future, including careers in California's creative economy. With your continued support, we can expand this proven program and bring these life-changing opportunities to more young people across the state. Thank you, and thank you all for the work you do. I appreciate you."

Erica Miller, Chance Theatre

"Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Erica Miller, and I'm honored to represent Chance Theatre, Anaheim's Official Resident Theatre Company.

Since 1999, Chance Theatre has used the transformative power of storytelling to foster connection, empathy, and understanding within our community. We are especially grateful to the California Arts Council for your previous support of our outreach programs like *Veterans Speak Up* and *Teens Speak Up*, which empower participants to share their personal stories through storytelling and performance. These programs have provided meaningful platforms for veterans and young people to find their voices, heal,

and inspire others. Your investment in these initiatives has truly changed lives, and we thank you for your partnership in making them possible.

As you prepare to vote on the 2025–2026 fiscal year grant programs, I'd like to highlight a few concerns. While we understand the goals behind consolidating grant categories, we are concerned that this could reduce opportunities for funding specific programs that have a direct and measurable impact. Programs like ours rely on targeted funding streams to serve unique community needs, and we hope you will consider preserving avenues for these specialized initiatives.

In addition, I'd like to emphasize the critical importance of support for general operating expenses. Sustaining daily operations of art organizations ensures that we can deliver all of our programs effectively, build capacity, and plan for the future. General operating support is vital for organizations of all sizes but particularly for those in the mid-range budget category, which often lack access to the resources available to both smaller grassroots groups and larger institutions.

Thank you for your dedication to supporting arts and culture in our state. Your decisions today will help shape the future of organizations like ours. Thank you."

Jennifer Caballero, Executive Director, California Association of Museums (CAM)

"Good morning. I'm Jennifer Caballero, the California Association of Museums' Executive Director. I'm so grateful to have all of you here at the beautiful Bowers Museum, demonstrating how museums truly function to convene communities. I'm also part of a coalition of State and Regional Networks who are speaking today and have some concerns about what is before us for the vote. My comment regards the Programs Policy Committee's recent recommendations.

CAM supports simplifying grant applications to increase access to funding for smaller organizations and understands the need to reduce funding due to budget constraints. However, on behalf of the CAM Board of Directors, I strongly urge you to reject the Programs Policy Committee recommendation to end the Statewide and Regional Networks category as a distinct program.

Removing this category of grant funding will create a detrimental situation. 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 long-term 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. Thank you."

Julie Baker, CEO, Californians for the Arts

"Good morning. Julie Baker, CEO of Californians for the Arts, an SRN grantee under the CAC and a statewide advocacy service organization. I'm also speaking on behalf of a coalition of 31 SRNs.

The field has overwhelmingly requested general operating support over project support, and we agree. However, we still believe there needs to be distinct programs. We support simplifying grant applications, but we do not support dissolving the Statewide and Regional Networks program as a distinct program. We believe this sets a dangerous precedent that leads to the erasure of the value and impact of service organizations and other networks, which provide critical infrastructure to the State of California and to the arts ecosystem.

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. We urge you to keep it as a distinct CAC program with its own line item and guidelines and to keep all distinct programs, including Creative Youth Development, for general operating support instead of project-based program funding with specific criteria for each distinct program.

I want to make sure that the Council is looking at your own Decision Support Tool. I think it really points out concerns that we have. While this decision may feel like you need to make it today, I urge the Council to listen to public comments and consider the impact on the field.

When you make changes to programs almost every year, it creates instability. Consistency is what the field is looking for. The CAC's many distinct programs reflect the beautiful mosaic of the arts and culture ecosystem. This diversity is important to educate lawmakers on the wide-ranging impact arts and culture have as solution partners for California's civic issues. Thank you."

Griselda Suarez, Executive Director, Arts Council for Long Beach

"Buenos días. I'm the Executive Director of the Arts Council for Long Beach. Thank you again for being here, and thank you to OC Arts for hosting us at this museum. We really appreciate coming together in community.

I've reviewed your Decision Support Tool, and thank you for the wonderful presentation of your proposal here. Looking at the question, 'What might be unintended consequences, drawbacks, opportunities, or domino effects?' I want to share some thoughts.

As the Arts Council for Long Beach, we're considered medium-sized. We are not a first-time applicant but a longstanding resource for many of our artists and community organizations. We provide staffing, applications, and convening efforts to ensure the success of our community partners.

An example from your tool is the Creative Youth Development and Jumpstart programs. These are perfect examples of how we, as a medium-sized but grassroots organizer, support justice-impacted communities in Long Beach. Many of the organizations we partner with provide artist residencies and programs directly impacting youth. For example, they've formed an alliance in Long Beach against violence in communities of color, and we act as their arts arm.

By consolidating or minimizing these features, I don't believe panelists will be able to see these details clearly enough to identify the most impactful programs to fund. Thank you very much."

Bob Lehman, Vice Chair, San Diego Arts and Culture Commission

"Good morning. My name is Bob Lehman. 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 pre-pandemic 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."

Amy Erickson, Director, Angels Gate Cultural Center

"Thank you so much, Council, for being here in Southern California with us. I'm Amy Erickson, Director of Angels Gate Cultural Center, a medium-sized organization here in LA County that serves artists across the Harbor region.

We want to uplift the voices of the SRNs today but also acknowledge that many organizations like Angels Gate couldn't make it here. Let's be honest: we all want general operating support. It fills the gaps in program funding, especially when other grants sunset or fluctuate.

I'm also the Chair of Arts United San Pedro, a coalition for the San Pedro Arts and Cultural District. General operating support has been essential in helping us advocate for the arts locally.

However, lumping all programs into one category risks leaving out specialized programming like arts education. If arts education is swallowed whole in this plan, how will we sustain the pipeline of future artists and cultural leaders 5, 10, or 20 years from now? We need clear program categories to ensure advocacy and funding for critical initiatives like arts education. Please think about how you name and structure these programs for the future. Thank you."

Amy Erickson, Director, Angels Gate Cultural Center

"Thank you so much, Council, for being here in Southern California with us. I'm Amy

Erickson, Director of Angels Gate Cultural Center, a medium-sized organization here in LA County that serves artists all over the Harbor region.

We wanted to be here to uplift the voices of the SRNs, but also to acknowledge that many organizations, like Angels Gate, couldn't make it today. Let's be honest: we all want general operating support. It fills the gaps in program funding when other grants sunset or fluctuate.

I believe cultural district programming funds and Creative Corps funds have shown you that general operating support is essential. Its impact on artists across the state is undeniable. I'm also the Chair of Arts United San Pedro, the coalition for the San Pedro Arts and Cultural District, where we see this impact firsthand.

However, if you lump everything into one program category, important initiatives like arts education might lose visibility and funding. People at the state level may not recognize the importance of these programs without dedicated advocacy. If arts education is swallowed in this plan, how will we sustain arts and culture 5, 10, or 20 years down the road?

I urge you to carefully consider how you name and structure these programs. Thank you."

Victor Payan, Founding Director, Media Arts Santa Ana

"Hello, Council Members, and welcome to Santa Ana. My name is Victor Payan. I'm the founding director of Media Arts Santa Ana, a community-based arts and technology organization. I'm also a recipient of the Individual Artist Fellowship and the California Creative Corps Fellowship, which helped us create a free online video game to promote voting called *Votos Locos*. It's playable in three languages: English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Ten years ago, we invited the CAC to Santa Ana, and you came. That meeting helped us establish connections with elected officials, fueling advocacy efforts that led to a citywide arts master plan, a City Arts Commission, affordable housing for artists, and a grants program now surpassing \$1 million.

Arts funding is infrastructure funding, and it's more critical now than ever. California's artists are the ones creating the songs, films, poems, and performances that will help us navigate the uncertainty of the coming years. The chief export of California's artists is hope, and this hope benefits every community in the state.

I urge you not to consolidate programs or make cuts. Instead, fund everyone. And if you're interested, we have a sale this weekend at MASAMedia.org. Thank you."

Aqib Rahman, Arts for LA

"Good morning. My name is Aqib Rahman, and I'm here on behalf of Arts for LA. First, I'd like to thank the Council Members for their hard work. 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. Thank you."

Sarah Guerrero, Founding Artistic Director, Breath of Fire Latina Theater Ensemble

"Hello, my name is Sarah Guerrero, and I'm a proud Santanera. Growing up here, I was exposed to small organizations that helped me find my path as an artist. I'm now the founding artistic director of Breath of Fire Latina Theater Ensemble, the only Latina theater ensemble in Orange County.

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.

Breath of Fire has been a Cultural Pathways grant recipient, which allowed us to incubate writing programs for our community to tell their stories. The grant sustained us through the pandemic and supported my ability to create work addressing critical social issues.

I'm grateful for the California Arts Council's support and for the opportunity to speak today. Please consider the importance of maintaining distinct grant programs to continue supporting artists and communities like mine. Thank you."

Deja Douglas, Amador Arts

"Hello! My name is Deja Douglas. I'm from Amador County, a former foster youth, and a white-presenting person of color living in this rural community. The Amador County Arts Council has been transformative in my life, helping me find my voice, overcome invisibility, pursue my college education, and launch my professional journey.

Through the State-Local Partner Program, I was mentored by young adult artists who empowered me to become a leader in my community. Together, we advanced the district arts education plan and championed equity in arts learning.

This program doesn't just fund every county in California; it equips rural working artists with the tools to mentor and inspire the next generation of creative workers. Your investment in the State-Local Partner Program has strengthened my career, education, and voice.

What does the future hold? Thanks to your continued support, I and other young artists are mentoring high school students and welcoming them into the creative workforce. Thank you for your dedication to arts and culture across California—a predominantly rural state. Your investment makes a lasting difference in communities like mine."

Susie Tanner, Theater Workers Project

"Hi, I'm Susie Tanner, founder and director of Theater Workers Project and a longtime, very appreciative grantee. We work mainly with incarcerated and reentering populations and at-risk youth.

I want to echo the comments of those who oppose consolidating project-based grants into one category. As a former panelist on both CAC and LA County arts panels, I've been tasked with adjudicating grants based on my expertise as a theater artist.

Consolidating programs would lead to panelists judging applications outside their areas of expertise. This is deeply unfair to applicants, especially since in-person panel discussions—where panelists could share perspectives—have been discontinued.

Simplifying applications is a worthy goal, but lumping all project-based grants into a single pool would diminish the specificity and effectiveness of the adjudication process. I urge you to vote against this consolidation and restore individual grant categories.

Thank you for your work and for listening."

Celedine Hopkins, Amador Arts

"Good morning. My name is Celedine Hopkins, and my pronouns are they/them. I'm the Outreach Coordinator for the Amador County Arts Council, or Amador Arts.

Since I was 15, I've been involved with Amador Arts, working as a student director and engaging in arts administration, advocacy, and community engagement. With their support, I received a scholarship to attend Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre and later returned to Amador County to serve as Outreach Coordinator.

Growing up in Amador County as a queer, non-binary, autistic person was challenging. But Amador Arts was a place where I felt at home—a space where my creativity and identity were supported. Living in a small, conservative county can be isolating, but Amador Arts creates a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

I want to thank the California Arts Council for its continued support of Amador Arts as a State-Local Partner. Without this funding, we wouldn't be able to continue this lifesaving work. Thank you for your time."

Ricky Abilez, Arts for LA

"Hello, my name is Ricky Abilez. My pronouns are they/them, and I'm the Director of Policy and Advocacy for Arts for LA.

We appreciate the Council's efforts to streamline grant programs and simplify applications, which is critical for smaller organizations without dedicated development teams. However, 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. Thank you."

Sean Fenton, Executive Director, Theatre Bay Area

"Good morning, Council Members. My name is Sean Fenton, Executive Director of Theatre Bay Area, an SRN grantee and one of the nation's largest regional arts service organizations, supporting 200 theater and performance companies and thousands of individual artists.

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.

Theatre Bay Area strengthens the arts field in ways that align with the CAC's geographic equity goals. While based in San Francisco, we serve 11 counties, from Mendocino to Monterey. We support a wide range of organizations, including La Lengua Teatro en Español, San Francisco Recovery Theatre, and Oakland Theater Project. We urge you to retain SRNs as a distinct CAC program with its own line item and guidelines. Service organizations like ours are steadfast partners to the CAC. We rallied to preserve CAC funding six months ago. We ask the Council to recognize our value and support us as the backbone of the arts ecosystem. Thank you."

Sarah Weber, Executive Director of the Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO)
Item 13

Hi, thank you so much for doing that. My name is Sarah Weber, and I'm the Executive Director of the Association of California Symphony Orchestras (ACSO). I just wanted to ask the Partnership Committee to consider including ACSO as a partner, alongside our colleagues at other statewide service organizations such as California for the Arts, Cal Humanities, Create California, and the California Association of Museums.

We've been working for over 55 years to represent orchestras and music organizations of all sizes across the state. We work with a wide range of organizations, including youth, collegiate, community, professional festivals, choruses, and presenters. We provide professional development, advocacy, resource sharing, and capacity building. Along with these other esteemed service organizations, we believe we are

ideally situated to help this committee achieve its goal of expanding the sphere of influence in arts, culture, and creativity in California.

We know that the performing arts sector would be a valuable ally and partner, and I hope you will consider including ACSO on the list of partners. Thank you.

Michelangelo Camacho (San Diego County)
Item 15

Hello, everyone. My name is Michelangelo Camacho, and I come from San Diego County. I work with San Diego Art Matters. If you're not familiar with us, think of us as the "Arts for LA" for San Diego. We are the primary advocacy organization for arts in San Diego. Before joining this organization, I worked with the Visual and Performing Arts Foundation for San Diego Unified, which was founded by previous Chair Larry Baza to enhance access to art education. I just want to give a quick shout-out to Councilmembers Leah and Vicki for representing San Diego and speaking up in the way that was needed during the earlier discussions. The thoughtful, heartfelt discussion from all the California Arts Council members was really appreciated. I know this was a rollercoaster of emotions for you all, and I think people out in the field will feel the effects of your decisions, but I want to thank you for slowing down and being considerate. I truly appreciate it. I believe the staff will be able to do the work needed to deliver a better set of guidelines and programming. Thank you so much for taking the time to make these decisions carefully. I wanted to thank you, as I'm sure you don't hear it enough.

Jennifer Caballero

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. As a state and regional network, we have a vested interest in the outcomes of these discussions. We really appreciate that time was taken to avoid rushing through these decisions, especially around the guidelines. From a real-world perspective, thank you for being thoughtful in your deliberations. As arts workers out in the field, we really appreciate the time and space for these conversations. We recognize the work you do, and we want to be a partner in the process. We are well organized and accessible, and we are ready to help in any way we can. Thank you again for everything you do.

Megan Crosby-Jolliffe (Theater Bay Area)

Good afternoon, council members. My name is Megan Crosby-Jolliffe, and I'm the Membership and Community Engagement Officer at Theater Bay Area. I speak on behalf of TBA and the 200 arts organizations and 3,000 individual artists in our membership. I want to thank you for recognizing the impact of CAC funding for the San Francisco Bay Area. Despite facing significant challenges—rising costs, gentrification,

severe wealth inequality, and displacement of artists—this funding continues to be a lifeline for many arts organizations. TBA’s membership includes organizations like SF Batco, Zspace, and Magic Theatre, which rely on CAC funding to support artists, create new work, and collaborate across sectors. The Bay Area is a hub of experimentation, and CAC funding is an investment in innovation and equity. It helps to support the voices of our communities and allows for collaboration that ripples out across California. Thank you for supporting the growth and resilience of the Bay Area arts community.

Jennifer Drolet (Arts Council for Long Beach)

Good afternoon, members of the California Arts Council. My name is Jennifer Drolet, and I am honored to serve as a board member for the Arts Council for Long Beach. Yesterday, I had the privilege of taking 60 junior high students on a field trip through downtown Long Beach to explore public art. We discussed the meaning of murals, sculptures, mosaics, and installations. It was inspiring to witness how the students connected with the art, interpreted it, and found their voices. This type of arts education is essential for the growth and development of young people. It is made possible through targeted arts education programs, which I hope continue to receive priority funding. As the funding model shifts, I urge the Council to maintain a focus on arts education. Without intentionality, programs like the one I participated in could lose visibility and resources, and our communities would miss out on these transformative experiences. I hope arts education remains a priority as the funding decisions are finalized. Thank you for your time.

Selena Mendoza (Artist Safe Spaces)

Hello, everyone. My name is Selena Mendoza, and I’m the founder and CEO of Artist Safe Spaces. I started this organization in March 2020, and though it was the worst time to start something new, we’ve pivoted a lot since then. Our mission is to create spaces for artists, and we are now moving toward building the first Art Park, which is a concept I’m passionate about. I’m looking for a new fiscal sponsor and to raise funds for this project. If you're curious about what an Art Park is, I’d be happy to share more. I’m also very connected to the city of Santa Ana, where I previously worked with Loki Galleries. Many galleries closed during the pandemic, and I’m working to reconnect artists to these spaces. I love the idea of corporate sponsorships as a way to invest in the arts and bring attention to the value of culture in our cities. I’m also an artist myself, and I’ll be showcasing my Taino art at Fullerton Museum Center in March. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Dr. Ana Jimenez (Orange County Children’s Therapeutic Arts Center)

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Dr. Ana Jimenez, and I’m the founder of the Orange County Children’s Therapeutic Arts Center, which is located just a block away from the Bowers Museum. I’d love to give you a quick tour of our center if you have time. We serve mostly Latino families from low-income backgrounds, as well as children with special needs. I’m very proud of the growth we’ve seen over the years. When I

started this nonprofit, our budget was only \$50,000, but now we're close to \$3 million. This has been made possible through the help of our community partners. One of the things I wanted to emphasize today is how important operational funding is for nonprofits. It's easy to get program funding, but operations and administration costs are always a challenge. We're constantly fundraising for those expenses. Just last year, we raised \$80,000 during Giving Tuesday, and we're aiming for \$100,000 this year. Operational funding is critical, and I hope the California Arts Council will continue to prioritize this. Thank you for all that you do to support the arts.

Jan Williamson (18th Street Art Center)

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Jan Williamson, and I'm the Executive Director of 18th Street Art Center in Santa Monica. I'd like to speak in favor of the California Arts Council's Creative Core program. With your support, we hired 18 artists across 18 counties in California, offering them salaries, health benefits, and retirement planning. The artists also received a project budget to produce their work. This program didn't just provide jobs for the artists; it supported over 250 artists in total. As part of our program design, we gathered oral histories and created cultural maps of the community projects. These maps are a valuable tool for bringing non-arts people into the creative process and promoting health and well-being in our communities. We're so grateful for this program and the incredible opportunities it created for artists. Thank you for your support.

**CAC PUBLIC COMMENT WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS
PRE-COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2024**

- **Beatrice Cleophat (She/Her/Hers)**
Cleophat Bea World's Art Inc, Del Norte County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts and Accessibility, Arts and Public Media, Arts Education Exposure, Cultural Pathways, Research in the Arts
RE: Agenda Item 14. VOTING ITEM: 2025 Council Meeting Dates and Locations, 15. General Public Comment

Art's is about to makes smile in people's face and understand error's one and each other.

- **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

RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

I am concerned with the proposed consolidation of grant programs - specifically eliminating the SRN grant and folding it into the GenOps support, as well as merging all project-based grants into one category.

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.

Anonymous

San Francisco County

Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Artists in Schools, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Creative California Communities, Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action), Impact Projects, Local Impact, Statewide and Regional Networks

Greetings. Is there any way to adjust the timeline for when grantees receive funding so that the funding comes in at the start of the grant period? It is very difficult to be expected to start a project Oct 1, 2024, for example, and then not received funding until March 2025. This is especially true if one is a small organization, which is a priority area for CAC.

Also - PLEASE bring back Artists in Schools funding. It is super valuable.

IF programs are cut due to budget issues, can that be announced earlier? We plan our programming based on what funding is available, and have to do a major adjustment QUICKLY if a program is not offered.

THANK YOU!!

- **Dan Zev Levinson (He/Him/His)**
Humboldt Arts Council; California Poets in the Schools, Humboldt County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Please restore the Artists in Schools grant! My colleagues and I received it for the 16 consecutive years it was offered, except for 2021-22 when it was not offered and we received an Impact projects grant instead. We were able to bring poetry residencies into schools for the first time, while other schools were able to financially meet us halfway. Schools came to rely on CAC funding for this work which has become integral to their curricula. We have been in some of these sites for decades, instilling a love for poetry in the students who grow up with it and pass it along to their children. In fact, we regularly teach students whose parents we had also taught. We regularly get our students published in a statewide anthology and on websites, and feature their work in other ways, and we lead poetry readings in the community. Because Proposition 28 does not specifically include poetry, several of our sites believe that they cannot use it to fund us, and we have lost work. For myself, I do this as a living, with my entire calendar filled with residencies as a teaching artist. While we were able to receive an Impact Projects grant one time, it is not a good fit for what we do, especially as its criteria become more specific over time. We need statewide funding to help keep our program alive. We know that poetry matters to the CAC and trust that you all will find ways to continue to support us.

- **Margo Perin (She/Her/Hers)**
California Poets in the Schools
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Please go back to funding arts in education. Children and youth have so few opportunities to explore their thoughts and feelings, practice critical thinking skills, and develop their artistic imaginations and skills in public education. Every child in every school should have this opportunity; the fact that very few have due to significant underfunding and knowledge of how valuable the arts are has a deeply deleterious effect on society, as you know. Schools may say they teach poetry, but how many actually teach poetry writing and have the ability to teach children and youth how to spread their wings so needed in other academic subjects, further education and jobs?

- **Brittany Delany (She/Her/Hers)**
Orange County Museum of Art, Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth

Arts Action)

RE: Agenda Item 15. General Public Comment

Thank you to the California Arts Council for supporting the Orange County Museum of Art with a Creative Youth Development grant, which supported:

- 4 weeks of ArtistAs Camp at Washington Elementary school in Santa Ana with 4th grade students, two teachers in the District and an OCMA Teaching Artist who is also based in Santa Ana. Each week was a version of showing an artist and the different roles that take, for example Artist as Observer, Artist as Storyteller.
- They came to OCMA for a tour of the museum to see the art they were learning about during the week, engage with different staff at different departments (educators, installers, etc.). It was a great exposure opportunity for them.
- It was our first offsite school program and we've grown our relationship with the Santa Ana Unified School District.

We look forward to staying updated on upcoming opportunities are available so we can continue to grow our programs!

- **Kim Presley**
Liberty Painting Corp dba Liberty Arts, Siskiyou County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General
Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure, Impact Projects, Local Impact

I am writing from Siskiyou County, unknown by most but the 5th largest county by area in the state. Ironically, we rank 7th/58 in population. Our largest city has a population of 7,500.

This is a rural county with a declining population and economy which doesn't attract new business or a diverse labor force.

These facts were made clear in the Healthy Places Index (HPI) with the county ranking 57th.

To fulfilled the CAC mision to serve all California counties, I ask for county demographics be considered when weighing the responses to ethnic diversity/inclusion. We work hard for inclusion but, the truth is that this county is 80% white/ 11% multi-racial, 1.6% Black and 1.6% Asian.

If it is a numbers game we will always lose- despite outreach to areas so remote they don't even rate on the HPI, and hosting over 1,300 student visits in a county that doesn't yet have a Strategic Arts Plan.

- **Lenore Hamel (She/Her/Hers)**
, Riverside County
Current or Former Grantee:

If more help can be given to artists who seeking to get grants, perhaps workshops. Maybe a clear explanation between emerging artists and other categories. Also, if artists should give detailed account on their work. Or could there be a contact person to answer questions.

- **Amber Jo Manuel (She/Her/Hers)**
The Center for the Arts, Grass Valley, Nevada County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure

Since 2019, The Center for the Arts in Grass Valley has been a crucial provider of youth arts education. We have expanded our programs by 400%, now serving up to 5,000 youth in the Sierra foothills. We unequivocally bring the arts to more young people in our community than any other organization in the county. Recently, we became a bus stop, highlighting the demand for our afterschool programs. However, this year, due to our limited operating budget of \$3 million, we could only apply for 1 grant. Despite applying, we were denied funding for the Arts Education Exposure grant, which historically supported a free student matinee program that brought impactful productions to hundreds of children. Rural communities are in dire need of access to the arts. The recent election results, with our county voting red for the first time in decades, pose a critical question: How will decreasing arts education in rural America influence our electoral outcomes in the future? Moreover, where will our youth cultivate empathy, artistic expression, and motivation to stay engaged in school when arts education is diminished? This is a disservice to children in rural areas, many of whom come from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. I urge the California Arts Council to reassess its funding priorities and again offer more options for arts education. Please consider not only the size of an organization's budget but also the significant impact it has on a community that has no other options.

- **Bernard Wozny (He/Him/His)**
California Writers Club (CWC) Sacramento Branch, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee, Unsure what this means

As President of the California Writers Club, Sacramento Branch, I want to ask what support the CA Arts Council provides to writers and developing authors. This can also impact the entire spectrum of literacy from children to adults.

As authors, we want the written word to be recognized as an art form. In order to encourage literacy and written art, the CWC is sponsoring a Sacramento Book Festival on May 31, 2025. The Branch also celebrates a Centenary in October 2025.

Our connections date back to Jack London, Ina Coolbrith and many other historical authors. We also promote California Writers Week in the third week of October. This was set in statute by the California Assembly in 2003.

- **Loy Holder (She/Her/Hers)**
Elk Grove Writers Guild, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: City of Sacramento and City Elk Grove, also County of Sacramento

I would like to see more available grants for Nonprofit writers and authors nonprofit groups. My nonprofit, the Elk Grove Writers Guild could use funding for operations expenses as well as Funds for community Writers Conferences and seminars. We do both.

Sincerely,
Loy Holder, President
Elk Grove Writers Guild

- **Lisa Kaplan (She/Her/Hers)**
Middletown Art Center, Lake County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, California Creative Corps, Impact Projects, Local Impact
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Thank you for receiving my comment! I applaud CAC's support for small to mid size organizations in rural communities over the years.

I am writing to underscore how important that is for rural Northern California counties that do not have access to many philanthropic grants. Most philanthropic grants are restricted to the greater Los Angeles, Sacramento or Bay Areas. And, there is not much local philanthropy, in counties with a low in median income. Also—In rural low-income regions where health care, addiction treatment, and housing are great needs, the arts are often not a priority for local philanthropists. Thus, rural arts organizations, rely heavily on the CAC and other state and federal grants. Our need for CAC support can be as much, or greater than many low-income urban areas because access to funding is so very limited.

Also: We generally have few staff members who wear many hats. So writing 2 grants at the same time is very burdensome. For example Operations and Impact, which are both wonderful opportunities for rural organizations, generally are available at the same time. Spacing grants out is a way to provide a kind of equity for smaller limited-staff rural and other small organizations, and support staff health, and through that organization and its operational health.

Thank you for hearing me and for your support of rural CA counties!

- **Anya Behn (They/Them/Theirs)**
Aliencranberry Arts, Contra Costa County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee

I would like CAC to be more focused on helping individual artists survive and work as artists.

Main focus appears to be on arts organizations but that is not money going directly to artists to help us make a living. One way to do this is by CAC pushing for universal income for artists. This will give individual artists a basic level of support. Artists create our culture. Visual artists struggle and most artists have other jobs so they can live. Imagine our world if artists could focus on creating and making a better place! SF ran a pilot program as did NY. Enough experiments, let's make it real. Let's get the idea out and push our government to make it so.

Thank you.

- **Xuezhong Qin Qin (He/Him/His)**
Los Angeles Beijing Opera Association, San Bernardino County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee

Purpose of this comment: Is it feasible to obtain grant support for creation of new Beijing Opera play? If so, what is the category of the grant it belongs to?

Los Angeles is a global cultural center, and Peking Opera is an important part of this culture. In 1931, Peking Opera master Mei Lanfang visited the United States, introducing Peking Opera to the American people. To honor his contributions, Pomona College in Southern California awarded Mei Lanfang an honorary doctorate. Over the past century, Peking Opera has flourished in the United States and gained great popularity among the American public. Unfortunately, with the passing of the older generation of Peking Opera enthusiasts, the survival of Peking Opera faces significant challenges. The creation of this production will engage Peking Opera fans, attract new audiences, particularly non-Chinese groups, and play an important role in revitalizing the art of Peking Opera and promoting cultural diversity. Additionally, Los Angeles will

host the 2028 Olympics, and performances of this production during the event will bring economic benefits to the city. Moreover, the production tells a story of the misfortunes brought by war and celebrates love, carrying significant humanistic and social value.

- **Bobette Stanbridge (She/Her/Hers)**
Ventura County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee, Artists in Communities

Offer grants to individual artists to complete projects. Arrange it to be put on display to the public. Lift up older artists who have been creating all their lives but haven't been recognized.

- **Sarah Weber (She/Her/Hers)**
Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs, 13. VOTING ITEM: Partnership Committee Recommendations

I represent the Assoc of CA Symphony Orchestras (ACSO), a proud SRN grant recipient. ACSO supports CAC's goal of streamlining and simplifying its grant program to increase accessibility, especially for smaller orgs, to align with its Strategic Framework. However, we are concerned about consolidating the SRN program under general operating support. Erasing the SRN grant diminishes the vital role service orgs play in the arts ecosystem, forcing us into competition with our own constituents and CP orgs. It will be difficult for grant reviewers to fairly assess the merit of applications of arts service organizations vs direct arts providers, as we have different roles.

SRNs help achieve the CAC Strategic Framework's goal of geographic equity, serving vast and often under-resourced regions. We also advocate for the arts and train lawmakers and constituents on the importance of public funding.

ACSO urges the Council to retain the SRN program as a distinct grant. If the proposal moves forward, the Gen Ops Funds program should include subcategories for different types of applicants.

Additionally, I request that the CAC Partnership Committee include ACSO as a partner, alongside other statewide service orgs such as CA for the Arts, Create CA, CAM, and Cal Humanities. Representing 100s of orchestras and 1000s of individuals in CA's performing arts workforce, ACSO is a valuable partner to help CAC expand its sphere of influence on arts, culture, and creativity across the state.

Anonymous

Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Artists in Schools, Arts and Accessibility

RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs, 15. General Public Comment

Individual Artist grants need to be assigned to their grant amount level by your committee, and should not be determined by the artist. There needs to be inclusion of disabled artists. Multidisciplinary artists need higher ranking as they have done twice the work. They should be allowed to apply in two arts categories. For example poet plus painter or music teacher. Folk arts awards need to state and include Jewish arts.

Please email everyone the contact email for complaints about regional arts councils, and problems with grants.

All applications online are not meeting disabled needs and need to be provided in paper, with disabled granted deadline extensions. Disabled applicants need assistance to review and help with application issues. DEI by race needs to stop it is illegal and is discriminating against Whites and Jews. Read your history, the Jews lost 6 million people in the Holocaust, and this state needs to include them at all times, and increase their funding to the few whose families survived. You should have blind applications by number without a name, which identifies gender or race, and select the best work. OLDER applicants should sit on panels, and OLDER applicants should be awarded funds, as 18 years of individual awards were defunded. NEW immigrants should not be funded until 20 years living/working here.

Comments should have no word limits.

Anonymous

Santa Barbara County

Current or Former Grantee: Individual Artists Fellowships, poet laureate, discrimination in general in grants

RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs, 15. General Public Comment

Concern about the Santa Barbara Poet Laureates, Individual Fellowship being unfair, racial discrimination, and a Legacy (\$50,000) passed away weeks after receiving it. concerns about the review process and who makes decisions? There needs to be feedback on their application, given to all individual grants applicants as it WAS ONCE STATED then changed. rate on a scale of 100%. Publishing is not a key factor and all other things must be considered, working in schools, recording or spoken word, years

writing, voice, and integrating other art forms. Publishing and web presence cannot be required and discriminates against disabled writers. more adventurous voices need support. Poets/ artist professors at colleges already have income and shouldn't get grants.* A huge state, diverse voices outside of academia need to be heard. support of a press with Spanish publishing is not ok. English is our shared, official language. All schools teach English. Poet Laureates have mentored others , and these should not be selected as laureates, as a conflict of interest and continues the same style of work. Such as Perie Longo , M. Palacio. Poet Laureates are not meeting local residency requirements, as the past 2 have been multi--states residence at once. A Poet LAureate as well as other award recipients should be for older more experienced writers and artists musicians. Poet Laureates in another state is awarded \$40,000 and here, only \$2000 is given. Change this!

Anonymous

RE: Agenda Item 15. General Public Comment

Public comments should not have a word or character count. I want someone who will respond and their direct email name and title.

- **Kerstin Kansteiner (She/Her/Hers)**
Art Theatre of Long Beach, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs, 15. General Public Comment

The Art Theatre Long Beach, Long Beach's last independent movie theatre, supports the work of the California Arts Council to support and create opportunities in the arts for Californians.

- **Deborah Brockus (She/Her/Hers)**
Brockus Project Dance Company, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities, Artists in Schools, Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief, Arts Education Exposure, Arts Integration Training, California Creative Corps, California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners, Creative Yout
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

The pie chart for Allocations by Program 2022, 2023, 2024.

This is reflective of money spend, but not showing the number of groups funded.

Due to the new way of allocating money for example by selecting to fund on the top scoring applicants for the full amount of money, a much smaller number of groups and

communities are being served - so the full demographic - regionally and economically and racially is now not being funded.

Please look at the numbers of groups and their impact comparison between 2022-23 and 2024-25 funding.

A huge swath of CA nonprofits and the people they served have been completely shut out.

We rallied our people to help ensure there was funding for the CAC, and then the money in the budget of the CAC was not allocated equitable.

Are you funding support for arts access for all Californians or just a few groups? please be clear because small nonprofits are short on time and energy to be doing grants they will most likely not get due to the very high scoring cut off for any funding at all vs the decreasing amount funding from previous years (and the increased of each grant award must be taxing the CAC budget)

sincerely Brockus

- **Tracy Polkownikow (She/Her/Hers)**
Arts Visalia Visual Art Center, Tulare County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief

CAC Support for Tulare County is critical to continue to develop the budding art economy in our underserved region. Organizations like Arts Visalia and The Arts Consortium are critical in providing opportunities for artists to develop, exhibit, and engage the community with their art. Please continue and grow your support for our region.

- **Nancy Olivares (She/Her/Hers)**
California Humanities, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action)
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Dear Council Members:

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 under-resourced regions or in underserved urban areas. California Humanities relies on the State Regional Network grant and strongly opposes the erasing of the program.

- **Jenny Darlington-Person (She/Her/Hers)**
Arts Council of Placer County & Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Nevada County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership, Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

I am the ED of the Arts Council of Placer County and a board member of ACSO. 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.

- **Marissa Ferreira (She/Her/Hers)**
Amador County Arts Council, Amador County
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Hello, I am Marissa Ferreira and I am an artist in Amador County and a grant recipient of the Amador County Arts Council.

The Amador Arts has supported my art career for the past year and a half; helping with grant applications, helping promote my art to the community and have helped me pursue other art opportunities. Without an arts council like Amador Arts acting as a local partner to the California Arts Council, my life would be nothing in the art community. Amador Arts has added so much more meaning to my creative life; with the amount of support and outreach, I've been able to build relationships and connect with people that I otherwise would not have. With the support of Amador Arts and Executive Director Meghan O'Keefe, I fully intend to build more relationships and continue to bring more art to our community both in schools and to local businesses. I want to thank you for funding the state local partner program because it brings myself and other artists in Amador County an arts council like Amador Arts; thank you for continuing to sustain our communities with the SLP program.

- **Victor Payan (He/Him/His)**
Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA), Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General
Operating Relief, California Creative Corps, Cultural Pathways, Impact
Projects, Individual Artists Fellowships, Local Impact, Organizational
Development, Professional Development
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Hello, Council Members and welcome to Santa Ana. My name is Victor Payan, and I'm Founding Director of Media Arts Santa Ana (MASA), a community based arts and technology organization. I am also a recipient of the Individual Artist Fellowship and the California Creative Corps Fellowship, which helped us to create a free online video game to promote voting called VOTOS LOCOS, which can be played online in three languages, English, Spanish and Vietnamese, at www.votoslocosgame.com.

I'm here with our co-founder Pocha Peña, who is a Santa Ana native. About ten years ago, we invited the CAC to Santa Ana, and you came. Since then, we have led successful advocacy efforts that resulted in the creation of a city arts commission, affordable housing for artists, and a grants program that just passed the million dollar mark in its granting to organizations, collectives and individual artists.

Arts funding is infrastructure funding, and it is more critical right now than perhaps ever before. People are scared about the next four years.

The chief export of California's artists is hope. This hope reaches every community in California, and directly benefits the lives of every Californian.

Funding from the CAC is a critical lifeline to California's artists and arts communities. It is a profound investment in the future. It saves lives. It changes lives. And yes, it creates jobs.

I urge you not to consolidate programs and continue to defend arts funding in the face of proposed cuts.

- **Meghan O'Keefe (They/Them/Theirs)**
Amador County Arts Council, Amador County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts Education Exposure, Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action), JUMP StArts, Impact Projects, Organizational Development, State-Local Partnership, SLP-Mentor
RE: Agenda Item 10. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Hello, I am Meghan Joy "mojo" O'Keefe (they/them). I am a Teaching Artist for Poetry Out Loud since 2017. I am a working artist who practices all types of art as a way of life. I am queer, nonbinary, learning-disabled, formerly unhoused, and a survivor of sexual assault. I am the Executive Director of Amador County Arts Council, a state-local partner since 1982 serving the Mokelumne and Cosumnes watersheds on Miwok lands. I am also the SLP Mentor serving San Joaquin County.

San Joaquin County (SJC) students cannot access Poetry Out Loud (POL) without an SLP. Students like Ianna Diaz of Tracy have been traveling to another county to participate. Last winter, Ianna traveled to Stanislaus County to participate in POL because no SLP serves her county. This year, Ianna and all of the high school students within SJC have access to POL thanks to the State-Local Partner Mentorship program. Thanks to SLP-M, students like Ianna will have Poet Laureates and Teaching Artists engaging them in this life-changing curriculum and supporting them as they develop their voices and step boldly into the work of Poetry and art-based community service.

This mentorship allows existing SLPs to nurture the CAC strategic vision on the ground in counties that do not currently embody these practices, values, and visions.

Please continue to fund the State Local Partner Mentorship program so that every county can bring the power of POL to all high school students across the state. Thank you.

- **Jacquil Constant (He/Him/His)**
Haiti International Film Festival, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners
RE: Agenda Item 13. VOTING ITEM: Partnership Committee Recommendations

My name is Jacquil Constant, and I am the executive director of the Haiti International Film Festival. The organization has existed for 9 years as a nonprofit and showcases at the Barnsdall Gallery Theatre in Hollywood, California. Our film festival is in its 10th year, and the theme is liberation through cinema. The organization's mission is to showcase Haiti's positive image through film. We want to establish educational distribution through partnerships with community colleges, universities, museums, high schools, and libraries to create sustainable revenue for the independent film festival in Los Angeles and beyond.

I am also a cinema professor at Pasadena City College and the director/writer/producer of the award-winning film Haiti Is A Nation of Artists is about Haitian artists creating transformational art after the devastating earthquake in 2010. I want to develop sustainable partnerships through an art ecosystem of art nonprofits, educational institutions, and the creative business industry to showcase Haitian art and high-quality cinema to change the narrative of Haiti through resilience and community resources.

I recently received certification from a Business of Art class as a facilitator and creative entrepreneur through the Center of Cultural Innovation. I am also a fellow for sustainability through the Center of Nonprofit Management.

- **Ingrid Garner (She/Her/Hers)**
Arts Orange County, Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: JUMP StArts
RE: Agenda Item 15. General Public Comment

I wish I could have been there on Friday to express my thanks in person, but I missed it for the best of reasons. I was down the street putting our JumpStarts funding to excellent use at Women's Central Jail. I teach transitional-aged youth there and at Theo Lacy Facility through Arts Orange County's creative writing jail program, which has been the greatest honor of my life.

I'm endlessly moved by my students' creativity. Through writing, they explore places beyond their confines and experiences outside their own. I've learned that the correctional system often reinforces feelings of worthlessness among its residents. I don't know anyone who has been effectively shamed or demeaned into improving their life, yet this is often the promise of incarceration.

I encourage my students to discover something that ignites their passion because I believe artistic expression is a far more effective vehicle for change. I grew up believing I was incompetent until I discovered theatre and writing. When I finally found something I excelled at, the confidence I gained transformed every aspect of my life, including my grades.

I've been an independent theater-maker for the past decade, but a lack of local resources has mostly forced me to leave the country to earn a living in my field. This grant has not only delivered life-saving arts to struggling youth but has also supported me as a local artist, enabling me to present my work in California for the first time in years.

- **Sofia Vivanco Airaghi (She/Her/Hers)**
Nevada County Arts Council, Nevada County
Current or Former Grantee: California Creative Corps, California Cultural Districts, State-Local Partnership

As the Grants Manager for Upstate California Creative Corps, administered by Nevada County Arts Council, I am pleased to report on the tremendous impact we have achieved through our cohort of 80 grantees from across 19 counties in rural northern California. We broke boundaries and reached new corners of our state— 88% of our grantees were individual artists/culture bearers and organizations who had never before received state funds, we had representation from 32 different tribes, and had 32 different languages spoken by people on our project teams – which are truly significant inroad towards CAC's equity goals. Our artists worked on campaigns of awareness tackling society's most critical issues including houselessness, climate and disaster preparedness, anti-racist curriculum, supporting people in recovery, and community engagement and belonging to name a few. The projects were timely, necessary, and the fullness of their impacts will continue to be felt for years to come.

In early December, we gathered with the other 13 Administering Organizations (AOs) for a final roundtable where we each presented our programs and accomplishments. We are wondering about the Council's prioritization of and timing for a consolidated Final Impact Report featuring findings of all 14 AOs for the Creative Corps? We believe this will be a powerful tool for future advocacy to continue the Creative Corps, stimulating the creative economy and the ongoing professional development of artists.

**Minutes of Public Meeting
CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL
Friday, January 24, 2025
10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
On Location/Virtual Hybrid Meeting
Sutter Theater Center for the Arts
754 Plumas Street
Yuba City, CA 95991**

The members of the California Arts Council convened in Yuba 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 Vice Chair Leah Goodwin
Council Member Gerald Clarke
Council Member Vicki Estrada
Council Member Roy Hirabayashi
Council Member Dorka Keehn
Council Member Phil Mercado
Council Member Nicola Miner

Council Members Present Remotely:

Council Member Caleb Duarte
Council Member Alex Israel

Council Members Absent:

n/a

Arts Council Staff Present:

Danielle Brazell, Executive Director
Ayanna Kiburi, Deputy Director
Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services
Carissa Gutierrez, Director of Public Affairs
Elisa Gollub, Arts Program Manager
Megan Morgan, Race & Equity Manager
Rebecca Ratzkin, Equity Measures & Evaluation Manager
Kimberly Brown, Public Affairs Specialist
Zachary Hill, IT Specialist
Steve Mok, Public Affairs Specialist

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Public Affairs Director called the roll and established a quorum

3. Land and People's Acknowledgement

Council Member Roy Hirabayashi read the California Arts Council's Land and People's Acknowledgement.

4. Opening Remarks

Chair Messina Captor Messina Captor welcomed the attendees and acknowledged the interpreters in the room including Paula DiMuro and Christine Callesen (ASL), Darlene Rochella (captioner), Daniel Cerqueira and Giselle Franco Job (Spanish/English simultaneous translation).

5. Welcome from David Reed, Executive Director of Yuba Sutter Arts Culture; Dave Shaw, Mayor of Yuba City; Gary Bradford, District Four Supervisor of Yuba County; and Jeff Stephens, District Five Supervisor of Sutter County.

The meeting opened with a welcome from the Chair, who introduced David Reed, Executive Director of the Sutter Theater Center for the Arts. Reed acknowledged Yuba City Mayor David Shaw, Yuba County Supervisor Gary Bradford, and Sutter County Supervisor Jeff Stephens, expressing appreciation for the California Arts Council's long-standing partnership. He highlighted the region's commitment to the arts and the success of the previous evening's event.

Reed introduced key local leaders, including Yuba Sutter Arts Council President Susan Miller, Secretary Narendar Dhaliwal, and Artists in Residence Pamela Novak and Marcella Hernandez Castillo. He also recognized staff members Shantae Arroyo, who leads arts education programs, and Managing Director Abby Cecina. He provided an update on the Sutter Theater Center for the Arts, detailing its history, renovation progress, and plans for a 300-seat performance space.

Mayor Shaw welcomed the Council on behalf of Yuba City, emphasizing the importance of arts in education and community development. Supervisor Bradford highlighted the thriving arts scene and acknowledged the contributions of local artists, thanking the California Arts Council for its support. Both expressed enthusiasm for continued collaboration.

6. Chair Messina Captor's Report

Chair Messina Captor read [her report](#).

7. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Brazell [read her report](#) and provided a presentation on the CAC's budget and organizational structure.

Executive Director Brazell then announced that Deputy Director Ayanna Kiburi would be stepping down from her post after nine years of service to the California Arts Council and had accepted a position at the California Department of Public Health.

Deputy Director Kiburi expressed deep gratitude for her nine years at the California Arts Council, highlighting the agency's dedication and the staff's commitment to implementing the Council's policies. She reflected on her work in advancing racial equity and praised the organization's resilience through change. While excited for her new role at the Department of Public Health, she assured the Council of her continued support and future collaborations, expressing heartfelt appreciation for the agency's work.

8. VOTING ITEM: Minutes from Previous Meetings

The Council reviewed [the meeting minutes from December 13th](#). Vice Chair Leah Goodwin raised concerns regarding misspellings and an incorrect attribution to a council member in the Equity presentation from that meeting. Councilmember Hirabayashi noted that their vote on Item 10 had been omitted from the minutes. She moved to postpone approval. Councilmember Keehn seconded the motion.

The Council proceeded with a vote to postpone approval of the minutes, with all members voting in favor. The Chair requested the minutes be corrected resubmit them for consideration for the February 28, 2025 Council meeting. The Chair also requested that Council members email any specific corrections to staff to ensure accuracy.

9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

The Programs Policy Committee [presented their recommendations](#) for the 2025-26 slate of grant programs to be opened through the Local Assistance annual appropriation. Council Members Clark and Duarte led the presentation, outlining their rationale for the proposed changes. The committee's goal is to increase accessibility (especially for first-time applicants), foster greater geographic equity and streamline the grant application process. Additional goals include simplifying applications, reducing administrative burdens, and expanding access for small organizations and first-time applicants.

The Committee recommended the continuation of seven core grant programs, including General Operating Support, Youth and Arts, Individual Artist Fellowships, Folk and Traditional Arts, Impact Projects, the State-Local Partner (SLP) Program, and the SLP Mentorship Program.

The Committee emphasized the use of data analysis to assess geographic equity and program effectiveness. A statewide funding map was presented illustrating the geographic reach of the Creative Corps program, demonstrating the need for a more equitable distribution of grants. Additionally, the Committee proposed exploring methods for redistributing unexpended funds to avoid returning them to the general fund.

Potential challenges discussed included ensuring program intent is maintained, addressing panelist training needs, and managing increased competition in a lean funding year. The Committee acknowledged public concerns and committed to refining program guidelines to mitigate unintended consequences. The Council commended the Committee's thorough analysis and strategic approach.

PUBLIC COMMENT (included in their entirety at the end of the minutes)

The Chair then opened the floor for council discussion. The discussion centered on clarifying the proposal to consolidate grant programs, emphasizing that it wouldn't eliminate funding for State Regional Networks (SRNs), but would streamline processes to address funding disparities, especially in rural areas. While concerns were raised about whether SRNs were consulted, it was explained that data analysis informed the changes to improve effectiveness. Support for the consolidation was expressed, especially for underserved groups, with the goal of increasing equitable access to funding. Challenges were acknowledged, including potential impacts on creative youth programs and SRNs' vital roles in rural areas. Suggestions included shifting to two-year funding cycles and improving outreach and panel training for fairness and inclusivity.

The motion put forward by the Programs Policy Committee, recommending the approval of 2025 grant programs, included: General Operating Support, Arts and Youth Program, Individual Artist Fellowship, Folk and Traditional Arts, Impact Projects, State Local Partner Program, and State Local Partner Mentorship Program. The motion also included the ability for the committee to develop recommendations for granting unexpended or returned funds should they become available throughout the year.

Vice Chair Goodwin proposed an amendment to move State Regional Networks from being consolidated into the General Operating Support program and listing it as the eighth, separate program. The amendment was seconded by Council Member Estrada, but after a vote, the amendment failed with only 3 in favor (Goodwin, Estrada, Hirabayashi), 7 not in favor (Messina-Captor, Clarke, Duarte, Israel, Keehn, Mercado, Miner).

The council proceeded to vote on the original motion.

The vote tally was as follows: 7 in favor (Messina-Captor, Clarke, Duarte, Keehn, Israel, Mercado, Miner), 3 not in favor (Goodwin, Estrada, Hirabayashi). The committee's proposal was accepted, and the following grant programs will open spring of 2025:

- General Operating Support, Arts and Youth Program, Individual Artist Fellowship, Folk and Traditional Arts, Impact Projects, State Local Partner Program, and State Local Partner Mentorship Program.

12:40-1:10 WORKING LUNCH

Council Members Duarte (virtual) and Mercado (in-person) departed during the lunch period due to scheduling conflicts. With 8 of the 10 council members present, quorum was still intact and the council meeting proceeded.

10. DISCUSSION: Strategic Framework Committee

The Strategic Framework Committee [presented its recent work](#) on refining the Decision Support Tool (DST) to enhance its effectiveness without adding unnecessary complexity. Council Member Roy Hirabayashi led the discussion, welcoming new member Councilmember Dorka Keehn. The committee has been reviewing the DST's use to ensure accessibility, accountability, and transparency in decision-making. A key recommendation is the introduction of a pre-DST worksheet to streamline the process at the committee level before reaching the full Council.

The Council appreciated the committee's work, with the Chair commending the presentation. The recommendations will proceed without requiring a formal vote, integrating refinements into the Council's decision-making process moving forward.

11. PRESENTATION: Poetry Out Loud 20th Anniversary

Director of Programs, Kristin Margolis, [presented on Poetry Out Loud](#), a national poetry recitation competition facilitated by the California Arts Council. She highlighted the program's upcoming state finals on March 16-17 in Sacramento, celebrating its 20th anniversary. The competition progresses from classrooms to county and state levels, culminating in a national event in May.

Margolis emphasized the program's inclusivity, spanning public, private, charter, and incarcerated youth education settings. She acknowledged local partners and invited Council members to serve as judges. The meeting concluded with enthusiasm for participation.

12. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment

All public comment listed at the end of these minutes.

13. Council Open Discussion

The Council held an open discussion, reaffirming committee structures with the addition of new member Keehn to the Strategic Framework Committee. A council member vacancy remains, pending appointment by the Governor's office. To foster familiarity among members, upcoming meetings will feature presentations on their work, beginning with Council Member Estrada in San Jose, followed by a taiko performance by Council Member Hirabayashi.

Council members expressed appreciation for departing Deputy Director Kiburi, emphasizing the integral role of art in healthy communities. The panelist selection process was discussed, with a call for applicants before the March 18 deadline. Additionally, a tribal initiative RFP is open, with concerns about securing panelists who understand indigenous perspectives. The Council acknowledged the challenges faced and encouraged broader participation to enhance inclusivity and representation across the state. The meeting then proceeded to the next agenda item.

14. In Memoriam

The Council expressed solidarity with communities affected by the Los Angeles fires, acknowledging the impact on artists, families, and friends. Council members affirmed their support for those in transition due to these events.

Vice Chair Leah Goodwin led a moment of remembrance for several influential figures in the arts who passed away over the past year. Below is the list of individuals honored:

- **Dec 10** – Michael Cole, American actor (*The Mod Squad* - "Pete"), made his transition, he was 84.
- **Dec 12** – Martial Solal, French jazz pianist and composer, made his transition, he was 97.
- **Dec 13** – Diane Delano, actress known for roles in *L.A. Law*, *Quantum Leap*, *Step by Step*, *Six Feet Under*, *Northern Exposure*, *Saved by the Bell: The New Class*, *Popular*, *ER*, *Days of Our Lives*, and *Pen15*, made her transition, she was 67.
- **Dec 14** – Zakir Hussain, Punjabi tabla virtuoso, Grammy Award-winning composer, producer (*Shakti: Global Drum Project*), and film actor, made his transition, he was 73.
- **Dec 17** – Alfa Anderson, American R&B vocalist (*Chic* - "Le Freak"), made his transition, he was 78.
- **Dec 21** – Art Evans, actor with over 120 credits in television and film, including *King*, *Hill Street Blues*, *Nine to Five*, *A Different World*, *Mad About You*, *Lincoln Heights*, and *A House Divided*, made his transition.
- **Dec 21** – Jeanne Toyo Wakatsuki Houston, American writer best known for *Farewell to Manzanar*, made her transition, she was 90.
- **Dec 23** – Geoffrey Deuel, actor known for roles in *The Monkees*, *Mod Squad*, *Insight*, *The F.B.I.*, *The Young and the Restless*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, *This is the Life*, and *Mannix*, made his transition.
- **Dec 23** – Shyam Benegal, Indian filmmaker (*Ankur (The Seedling)*; *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*), made his transition, he was 90.
- **Dec 24** – Michael Brewer, American folk-rock singer-songwriter (*Brewer & Shipley* - "One Toke Over the Line"), made his transition, he was 80.
- **Dec 24** – Richard Perry, American record producer (worked with *Harry Nilsson*, *Ringo Starr*, *Carly Simon*, *Leo Sayer*, *The Pointer Sisters*), made his transition, he was 82.

- **Dec 27** – Greg Gumbel, sportscaster and host, known for play-by-play on *The NFL on CBS*, also appeared on *Major League Baseball on CBS*, *Ebony/Jet Showcase*, *CBS Mornings*, *The Baseball Network*, *Hollywood Squares*, and *The NFL Today*, made his transition, he was 78.
- **Dec 27** – Olivia Hussey, actress known for *Jesus of Nazareth*, *The Bastard*, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, *It*, *Lonesome Dove*, and *Boy Meets World*, made her transition, she was 73.
- **Dec 29** – Aaron Brown, American broadcast journalist (*World News Now*, CNN reporter during 9/11), made his transition, he was 76.
- **Dec 29** – Linda Lavin, American Tony Award-winning actress (*Alice*, *Barney Miller* (1975-76), *Broadway Bound*), made her transition, she was 87.
- **Jan 1** – Wayne Osmond, American pop baritone singer (*Osmond Brothers*, *Donnie & Marie*), made his transition, he was 73.
- **Jan 3** – Brenton Wood [Alfred Smith], American pop and soul singer-songwriter ("*Gimme Little Sign*", "*The Oogum Boogum Song*", "*Catch You on the Rebound*"), made his transition.
- **Jan 4, 2025** – Emilio Echevarría, Mexican actor known for *Mozart in the Jungle* and other Mexican television productions, made his transition.
- **Jan 6** – Jim Larson, longtime member of the Mendocino Theater Company and husband of scene designer Diane Larson, made his transition.
- **Jan 7** – Peter Yarrow, Emmy-nominated producer and composer, part of the folk group *Peter, Paul and Mary* ("*Puff the Magic Dragon*", "*Day is Done*"), made his transition, he was 86.
- **Jan 7** – Michael Going, renowned photographer known for altered Polaroid work, with a 36-year career spanning fine art, teaching, advertising, and editorial photography, made his transition, he was 81.
- **Jan 10** – Dr. Al Mijares, former Orange County superintendent of schools and champion of arts education, made his transition, he was 71.
- **Jan 10** – Sam Moore, American R&B and soul vocalist (*Sam & Dave* - "*Soul Man*", "*I Thank You*"), made his transition.
- **Jan 12** – Leslie Charleson, actress who starred in over 1,400 episodes of *Love Is a Many Splendored Thing* and over 2,000 episodes of *General Hospital*, made her transition, she was 79.
- **Jan 12** – Mark Izu, bassist and composer pivotal in San Francisco's Asian American arts scene since the 1970s, made his transition, he was 70.
- **Jan 14** – Tony Slattery, British actor, comedian, and writer, known for *Saturday Stayback*, *Gems*, *Just a Minute*, *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, *Coronation Street*, and *Kingdom*, made his transition.
- **Jan 15** – David W. Duclon, Emmy-nominated producer and writer, known for *Working Stiffs*, *Double Trouble*, *Punky Brewster*, *Silver Spoons*, *Boys Will Be Boys*, and *On Our Own*, made his transition.
- **Jan 16** – David Lynch, American actor and director (*Blue Velvet*, *Eraserhead*, *Twin Peaks*), and transcendental meditation advocate, made his transition, he was 78. Council members encouraged continued submission of names to honor those who have contributed to the arts community.

15. Closing Remarks

Council members were invited to propose items for discussion at the February 28th Council meeting. Submissions can be sent via email to staff or executive committee members.

20. Adjournment

Chair Messina Captor adjourned at 2:11 PM.

CAC PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSIONS COUNCIL MEETING January 24, 2025

PUBLIC COMMENT

Julie Baker, California for the Arts

I am deeply concerned that there continues to be a proposal to eliminate the Statewide and Regional Network (SRN) Grant Program, which has been a vital source of support for arts service organizations for over 20 years. 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. I urge the Council to amend the Programs Committee's recommendations and maintain the SRN program as a distinct funding category. Before implementing any major program changes, I ask that you actively involve the community to fully assess potential consequences and ensure that long-term impacts are carefully considered.

Jenny Darlington Person, Arts Council of Placer County

Hello, and thank you for your time today. My name is Jenny Darlington Person, and I am speaking to you as the Executive Director of the Arts Council of Placer County, a

board member of the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, a grant writer for two individual arts organizations, and the former executive director of a seven-time California Arts Council grantee. I fully support the amendment that Julie Baker just spoke to and urge you to keep the SRN program as it is.

I'd like to highlight two key points. First, 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.

Kara Goger, Mariposa County Arts Council

Good morning. My name is Kara Goger, and I am the Director of the Mariposa County Arts Council, one of the CAC's State-Local Partners. I also serve on the leadership team of the Coalition of County Arts Agencies, which is composed of CAC's local arts partners.

On behalf of the coalition, I want to acknowledge the 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 and that the mission of the CAC is fully realized. Thank you for your consideration.

Clay Moeen River, Mariposa Arts Council

Hello, my name is Clay Moeen River, and I am Passamaquaddy. I'm a culture bearer, poet, visual artist, textile artist, muralist, and teacher. I serve as the Director of Projects and Programs and lead teaching artists at the Mariposa Arts Council, one of the CAC's State-Local Partners.

Our county is fully rural, located in the Central Sierra, about 150 miles from here, and our population is dispersed across 1,500 square miles. The Mariposa Arts Council is the only staffed arts organization in the entire county, and we provide consistent, equitable, community-based programming through creative placemaking initiatives, cultural planning, and arts education. Our programming serves diverse groups such as incarcerated individuals, at-risk youth, and our tribe, the Southern Sierra Muak Nation, offering creative platforms for their voices in support of their federal recognition efforts and in parallel with wildfire mitigation and restoring local ecosystems.

We also offer in-school education programs, a free summer concert series, and capacity-building regranting programs for local artists and grassroots organizations. Personally, I serve on our Historic Sites and Records Preservation Commission to challenge the romanticization of white settler culture and address the marginalization of BIPOC communities within our tourism-driven economy.

The Mariposa Arts Council is the only place where I, as an Indigenous two-spirit person, have found a full-time job that allows me to practice my art, teach, and serve my community. 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. Thank you for your continued support.

Victor Payan, Media Arts Santa Ana

Hello, my name is Victor Payan, and I am the Founding Director of Media Arts Santa Ana in Santa Ana. I want to thank you all for coming to our community for the last meeting and for the opportunity to continue the conversation. I 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.

I also advocate for restoring the \$5 million to the CAC budget. Arts funding is not just infrastructure funding—it's emergency relief. Arts organizations provide essential services to communities in crisis, and the need for these services will only increase in the coming years. We must be honest and clear about this. Arts funding saves lives, creates jobs, and provides hope, especially in communities of all sizes across the state. I urge you not to consolidate programs too much, to renew your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion—which is under attack—and to continue to be active partners in statewide advocacy efforts to defend and restore arts funding in the face of proposed cuts. Thank you.

Dave Mack, Artist Magnet, Justice Alliance

Hello, my name is Dave Mack, and I'm the Executive Director of Artist Magnet, Justice Alliance, and a member of the Board of Trustees for Creative West. I'm speaking today

in my personal capacity to voice my strong support for maintaining the SRN program as a standalone grant category.

I'd like to share a personal anecdote. 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.

Sean Fenton, Theatre Bay Area

Good morning, Council members. My name is Sean Fenton, and I am the Executive Director of Theatre Bay Area, an SRN grantee and one of the nation's widest-reaching regional arts service organizations. I am here today to urge you to preserve the SRN 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.

Please amend the Program Committee's recommendations to retain SRNs as a standalone funding category. Thank you for your time and commitment to the arts.

Gail McNeely, Youth Arts Alive

Hello, everyone! My name is Gail McNeely, and I am the founding director of Youth Arts Alive, providing free arts education in Santa Maria, California. I 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. Thank you for your hard work, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today.

Jennifer Caballero, California Association of Museums

Good morning, my name is Jennifer Caballero, and I represent the California Association of Museums. I am concerned about the proposed consolidation of the Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) as a distinct program area.

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 far-reaching 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.

I urge the Council to amend the Program Committee's recommendations and keep the SRN Grant as a distinct program, as it has been since 2002. While we recognize that funding will fluctuate in lean years, consolidating these programs would unintentionally diminish the impact of the funds and the CAC's mission to get resources into the communities that need them. Please consider this carefully before making any decisions. Thank you.

Sarah Weber, Association of California Symphony Orchestras

Hello, my name is Sarah Weber, and I am the Executive Director of the Association of California Symphony Orchestras, an SRN Grant recipient and service organization supporting hundreds of orchestras and music organizations. I am extremely disappointed to see the recommendation to consolidate the SRN Grant program into General Operating Support.

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. I urge the Council to amend the Program Committee's recommendation and keep SRNs as a distinct program, as it has been for over 20 years. Thank you.

Gail Lopes, Arts for LA

Hello, Council members. Thank you for this opportunity to comment. My name is Gail Lopes, and I am the Vice Chair of the Arts for LA Board of Directors. We at Arts for LA are deeply disappointed by the recommended consolidation of programs. Despite numerous attempts to engage the Program Policy Committee, including a letter representing over 30 SRNs with over 20 recommendations, our efforts went unanswered.

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.

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. 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. I ask, as others have today, that the Council amend the Committee's recommendations and keep the SRN Grant as a distinct program. Thank you.

Marsian DeLellis, Los Angeles Performance Practice

Hello, my name is Marsian DeLellis, and I'm an artist working in creative resourcing with Los Angeles Performance Practice (LAPP). I also serve on the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council. 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.

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, top-down relief efforts.

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.

Bob Lehman, San Diego Museum Council

Good morning. My name is Bob Lehman, and 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.

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.

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.

Please keep the SRN program as a distinct funding category. Thank you.

Gloria Ruiz Oster, California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA SoCal)

Hello! My name is Gloria Ruiz Oster, and I am the Deputy Director for California Lawyers for the Arts. As a longtime grantee in the Statewide and Regional Networks (SRN) category, we are requesting that the Program Committee amend their recommendations and maintain the SRN funding group as a distinct program, rather than consolidating it into general operating.

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.

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.

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. We urge you to reconsider. Thank you.

Kat Harper, National Steinbeck Center

Thank you, Council, for allowing us this transparency. I'm Kat Harper, Assistant Director of the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California. 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.

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. I definitely urge you to vote "No" on this particular proposal. Thank you.

Nancy Olivares, California Humanities

Hi, good morning. My name is Nancy Olivares, and I'm the Government Affairs and Community Outreach Manager for California Humanities. I'm speaking today to express my concerns about consolidating the SRN program.

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.

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.

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. We urge the Council to maintain the SRN Grant as a distinct CAC program with its own guidelines. Thank you.

Raëlle Dorfan, Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm Raëlle Dorfan, Executive Director of the Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles. We support and represent performers, choreographers, teaching artists, movement-based companies, and arts organizations of all sizes.

As my colleagues have already shared, 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.

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. Thank you.

Jason Jong, Office of Arts and Culture, Sacramento

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. My name is Jason Jong, and I am the Cultural and Creative Economy Manager with the Office of Arts and Culture in Sacramento. I'm also a former manager of the Cultural Pathways program and now lead the office, one of the CAC's State-Local Partners.

First, I suggest that when discussing any proposed policy or program changes, public materials should clearly indicate how the strategic framework was implemented in arriving at that specific decision.

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. Thank you.

Alma Robinson, California Lawyers for the Arts

Thank you so much, and I want to thank all the Council members for their attention to this issue. We are in a very challenging time in our state and country, and I think the role of the arts is going to be challenged. We need to stand strong on many fronts.

I wanted to mention a historical note. 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. Thank you.

Jose Rosales, Artist, Arts Advocate, and Business Owner from Orland, Glenn County

Until the Upstate California Creative Corps, I had not been aware of the State Local Program, nor had I realized what our community was missing. Thanks to the efforts of the Nevada County Arts Council to ensure state funds reach our communities, we are now in the process of forming our own 501(c)(3) arts agency under the SLP mentorship program here in Glenn County.

We are grateful that today's agenda includes a recommendation to continue this mentorship program. Establishing good foundations and relationships takes time, and we know we will need this support. I believe you will be proud of Glenn County's arts and culture when it is up and running. In March, we are launching a series of listening sessions across our county and conducting an important survey to ensure our strategic priorities align with our community's needs. Once again, we are excited here in Glenn County and deeply appreciative of the connections we've built with such wonderful, talented people. Thank you.

Joey Reyes, William James Association Prison Arts Project, San Jose:

Hi, my name is Joey Reyes (he/him), and I'm joining from San Jose with the William James Association Prison Arts Project. First, I want to thank you for supporting the Arts Administrator Pipeline Fellowship Program. This initiative equips emerging leaders with the tools, training, and connections needed to sustain transformative arts programming for our organization. The AAP fellowship has been pivotal in addressing critical gaps in funding and capacity for the programs we provide, both within and beyond California correctional facilities.

Initiatives like this are essential for cultivating the next generation of leaders who can tackle systemic challenges and drive innovation. I hope you'll consider continued investment in these programs to expand their reach and impact, ensuring that the power of the arts transforms even more lives and communities. On behalf of the William James Association and the communities we serve, thank you for your support.

Kelly Cutler, Program Manager, Truckee Cultural District:

I'm Kelly Cutler (she/her), Program Manager for the Truckee Cultural District. I'm here to share how we are utilizing Truckee Cultural District funds in our rural mountain town, where our local police department's tagline is 'Protecting and Serving at 6,000 Feet.' Last week, I spoke before the Town of Truckee, encouraging council members and staff to lean into the arts as a solution partner in addressing our most pressing 2025 community priorities, including workforce housing, climate impacts, and emergency preparedness. Additionally, the Truckee Chamber's recent business listening tour revealed that local businesses are struggling with the rising cost of living, leading to

workforce instability and employee retention issues. Currently, about 4,000 people in our local workforce commute from neighboring Reno, Nevada. Our message to Nevada County, home to two of California's cultural districts, is that now is the time to invest in our creative business economy as it relates to our city and county's communications, climate action, and economic development plans. In Truckee, the cultural district is investing daily by employing artists to curate and run our intergenerational Art at the Airport Exhibition Series, supporting downtown art events such as Pride Week and Trails & Vistas Art Hikes, hiring local artists to extend the town's dark skies educational campaign, piloting a career development internship for local high school students, and funding local writers and photographers to create content for *Muse*, our guide to arts and culture. As we refine our advocacy efforts for continued funding and expanded cultural district designations beyond 2026, we encourage community leaders to draw upon the depth of expertise and talent within our creative industry. Thank you for leading this charge.

Daniel Lopelato, Colusa County Arts Council:

Hello, I'm Daniel Lopelato from the Colusa County Arts Council. It's probably been years since anyone from my organization has addressed the Council, so I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and share how the Council's support has impacted our work.

Colusa County is a small agricultural community about 30 minutes down the road—you may have driven through it on your way here. We are recipients of grants through the State Local Partner Program as well as the Creative Youth Development Program. Funding from the California Arts Council has allowed us to implement programming for artists of all ages, from weekly youth arts education to a hyperlocal literary magazine featuring Poet Laureate Lee Herrick, local voices from Colusa County, and notable nonfiction writer David Mas Masumoto.

This funding has also helped us grow our organizational capacity and secure additional funding, including a three-year Levitt AMP Grant from the Mimi and Mortimer Levitt Foundation, allowing us to program three summers of live music. While we may be a small part of the broader arts landscape in California, people in our community frequently express their gratitude for our work. I wanted to take this moment to extend that gratitude to you for supporting us and other local arts agencies. Thank you, and welcome to the North State.

Richard Falcon, Founder & Executive Director, Teatro Nagual, Sacramento:

"Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Richard Falcon, Founder and Executive Director of Teatro Nagual, a Latino-based theater organization in Sacramento. We have been grateful recipients of generous support from the California Arts Council in the past. One of the key experiences I'd like to highlight is my role as the administering grant lead for the Sacramento-based Capital Region Creative Corps. Coming into this space without prior government experience, I was given an invaluable opportunity to see how things operate behind the scenes. More importantly, I had the privilege of working

alongside 26 awardees and five artists embedded in city departments like planning and transportation. My role was to support them in navigating the complexities of administering their grants, ensuring their success while offering them the grace to learn as they went.

Many small arts organizations struggle to navigate these processes. It was an honor to guide them, attend their functions, and assure them that they could succeed. They are eager for continued opportunities, and I encourage you to keep them in mind.

Additionally, as a Latinx theater director and educator, I am in touch with many similar organizations across California and the nation. With the ongoing challenges surrounding immigration, our community is mobilizing to determine the role artists must play in responding to the humanitarian crises caused by new laws. Artists are second responders, and we stand ready to use our craft to support those affected. Thank you.

Julie Baker, California for the Arts:

Thank you, Richard. That was beautiful, and I hope the Governor's office is listening because artists are ready to serve at any moment in time as your second responders.

Julie Baker, California for the Arts, a member of your former SRN network.

While I respect that this is your current process, and you all did a really good job of working within that—even if I'm disappointed by the results—I might suggest that part of the reason why folks are not applying is not only due to lack of outreach, which is difficult in the incredibly busy world that we all live in, but also how you change your programs and guidelines so often. The programs and the applications don't speak to the way that people do their work. At least, that is often what we have heard from the field and the surveys that we've done, that we have shared with you.

And that is why the Council needs to be in the field more often—not just two to three minutes of public comment in a four to six-hour meeting that most in the field do not have the time to attend.

No doubt, I understand hard decisions need to be made during difficult budget years, and I can assure you we are out there trying to fight for more funding all the time.

But this can also be done through allocations, not in programs. For example, we have programs that are currently unfunded. But if we work together to make the case, we could maybe get funding back for cultural districts, Creative Corps, and creative youth development. That was the year we saw \$140 million in your budget. And we need to show how impactful these programs were and how they meet your strategic goals and should be funded. This is what the Council should be working towards.

In addition, we have suggested this before—that committee meetings should be public.

The fact is that these two people on your council are doing this work without public transparency. I don't think that is responsible to the field. It should be a public meeting.

You can make more than two people on a committee, and then it would be under Bagley-Keene and would have to be.

Also, we have asked that council member emails be public, and I know that the staff is working on that. But that is an equitable way to ensure that anyone who needs to get in touch with the people who are making the policy decisions that impact the field are able

to reach you. There always needs to be more room for accountability and transparency in your process.

And there is always more need for data. I'm so glad you have a brilliant data person on your staff, but I'll tell you this—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.

Thank you.

Eliza Tudor, Nevada County Arts Council:

My name is Eliza Tudor, and I'm the Executive Director for Nevada County Arts Council. About 45 minutes from here, following the Yuba River northeast towards the High Sierra, are the twin cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City in the heart of Gold Country, on Nisenan tribal lands. Above us is Paradise, which burned to the ground in 2018, and many other communities impacted by the forces of nature, climate change, and a relentless scarcity of resources—all the way up to the Oregon border.

I've brought with me today some hard copy impact reports which highlight the work of artists across 19 counties under the Upstate California Creative Corps.

It's been such an honor to administer this program for you, **California Arts Council**, alongside state-local partner agencies in almost every county.

The communities we serve as state-local partner agencies are distinct, yet we do not work in isolation. Together, we ensured \$3.38 million in funding for 80 grant recipients—88% of whom were first-time awardees of state funds.

Upstate California Creative Corps resulted in the creation of 460 jobs, totaling 65,437 workforce hours, reaching 210 zip codes across 19 counties and 47,149 square miles.

The Creative Corps ensured that our historically underrepresented communities benefited most from public funds and that we built much-needed capacity among artists, culture bearers, and our Northern rural nonprofits.

Our collective work for the Creative Corps under the **California Arts Council** has supported a larger-scale need to harness rural voices in establishing a regional approach to collective policies and programming as a transformational tool.

This continues to inspire and validate our trajectory in better serving our own local communities and is deeply relevant to our work as state-local partners.

And thinking back to the fabulous map with the blue and red dots, it seems like this isn't just a money issue. It's also about how **California Arts Council** might continue to work with its partners to embrace long-term geographic equity challenges.

Thank you.

**CAC PUBLIC COMMENT SUBMISSIONS
JANUARY 24, 2025**

- **Zijun Li (She/Her/Hers)**
Star Art Museum, Santa Clara County

Focusing on “Waterfront Space Brings Better Life for Human Beings” under the title of “Encounter”, “Watershed” is a regional imagination of “Waterfront Space Brings Better Life for Human Beings”, and “Encounter” is a deep-level participation in “Encounter”. “Basin” is a regional imagination of “waterfront space brings better life for human beings”, it is a staged display since the overall planning and renovation of Xiangxi riverfront space, and “Encounter” is a deeper participation of “Encounter”, which implies that we will meet each other unexpectedly in JingAn PengYuePu river landscape area, and in the public art, we will meet each other unexpectedly. Encounter” is a deeper level of participation, meaning that we will meet each other in the landscape area of Anne River, in the public art, and interact with the riverfront space through art works.

- **Barbara Palley (She/Her/Hers)**
Turnaround Arts: California
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Schools; Arts Integration Training; Professional Development; Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Please vote NO on 2025-26 Programs b/c of the proposed consolidation of General Operating, Statewide & Regional Networks (SRN), and Cultural Pathways into one grant program.

Already, far too many small-budget 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.

We hope you agree that this value must remain distinct and visible as you revisit the proposed program changes.

Turnaround Arts supports a network of arts organizations, artists and schools across the state, to support communities impacted by systemic oppression.

Anonymous

**The Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks; Arts &
Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief;
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs; 12. General
Public Comment**

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. We hope you agree that this value must remain distinct and visible as you revisit the proposed program changes.

- **Sarah Weber (She/Her/Hers)**
Association of California Symphony Orchestras, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks;
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

My name is Sarah Weber, executive director of the Assoc of CA Symphony Orchestras (ACSO). ACSO is a SRN grant recipient and a service organization supporting hundreds of orchestras, music organizations, and thousands of people statewide.

Once again, I urge the Council not to consolidate the SRN grant program under General Operating but to maintain it as a distinct program in 2025. 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.

Over the past two weeks, ACSO paused regular work to provide emergency relief for constituents in LA affected by wildfires. We conducted care calls, check-in emails, and impact surveys, convened orchestra leaders, compiled website resources, held emergency board meetings, and coordinated with other service organizations. We also supported our own team member who lost her home.

This is the unique, critical work of SRNs, demonstrating our value to the arts ecosystem.

Eliminating the SRN program would harm service organizations and our constituents now competing for the same grants.

SRNs help CAC reach priority communities, such as underserved regions, small organizations, individual artists, and those with limited resources/experience.

To simplify grants, consider removing Impact Projects in lean years and consolidating its funding into General Ops.

However, preserving the SRN program is vital to maintaining a healthy, equitable arts ecosystem.

- **Jennifer Caballero (She/Her/Hers)**
California Association of Museums, San Diego County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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

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.

- **Shayla James (She/Her/Hers)**
San Diego Creative Youth Development Network, San Diego County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

- **Vanessa Ramos Gonzalez (She/Her/Hers)**
The Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts & Cultural Organizations General

Operating Relief; Arts Education Exposure; Cultural Pathways
RE: Agenda Item 12. General Public Comment

Dear California Arts Council Members,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the dire state of arts funding in San Francisco. The arts community is facing an unprecedented crisis, with organizations forced to shut their doors due to financial hardship. Most recently, The Contemporary Jewish Museum (CJM) announced its closure, a devastating loss to the cultural landscape of our city.

San Francisco has long been a beacon of creativity and artistic innovation, yet without immediate and sustained financial support, we risk losing the very institutions that make our city vibrant and unique. Nonprofits, galleries, theaters, and museums are struggling to survive, and many are on the brink of closure. This not only impacts artists and cultural workers but also diminishes the economic and social vitality of our communities.

I urge the California Arts Council to prioritize increased funding and strategic support for arts organizations in San Francisco. Investing in the arts is investing in the future of our city and state. We cannot afford to stand by as these invaluable institutions disappear.

Thank you for your time and commitment to supporting the arts in California.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Ramos Gonzalez

- **Freddy Gutierrez (He/Him/His)**
YouthSpeaks, Alameda County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts Administrators Pipeline Fellowship

Participating in the Arts Administrators Pipeline Fellowship allowed me the opportunity to focus on real-time learning in the arts administration field. The stipend proved to be a crucial component of this opportunity as it allowed me to meet my basic needs while immersed in the fellowship. I was paired with YouthSpeaks in San Francisco. This opportunity helped me understand varying arts admin roles within an organization and how each plays a crucial role in the operation, success, and growth of an arts organization. Meeting other fellows in the program gave me helpful perspective by learning about their roles and respective organizations. And how uncanny that a good number of us are poets! It would be a great service to the arts administration field and the arts in the state of California for the California Arts Council to continue to support the Arts Administrators Pipeline Fellowship. Thank you.

- **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
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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

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.

- **Alma Robinson (She/Her/Hers)**
California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

Alma Robinson, Executive Director, California Lawyers for the Arts

- **Jennifer Oliver (She/Her/Hers)**
A Step Beyond, San Diego County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities; Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action); Impact Projects; Professional Development; Research in the Arts; Artists in Schools;
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

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.

Consolidating CYD and arts education programs risks blurring the lines between different practices and outcomes. This makes it difficult for panelists to equitably score programs that have different goals. I strongly urge CAC to maintain the integrity of separate grant programs, ensuring support for the diverse needs of the sector.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

- **Richard Stein (He/Him/His)**
Arts Orange County, Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

- **Joselyn Wilkinson (She/Her/Hers)**
Grand Vision Foundation, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Artists in Communities; Artists in Schools; Arts Education Exposure; Arts Integration Training; California Creative Corps; Professional Development
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Thank you members of the Council for your diligent efforts to serve the communities and constituents of California with equity and inclusivity. I hope that you continue to advocate for an increase of your budget to move California closer to an equitable per capita allocation and to support our vital creative economy. I applaud your move to consider consolidating applications for Arts Education grant programs and other program areas, but I implore you to fund at a level that will make a substantive impact for your grantees. Please consider raising possible grant awards, especially for medium size organizations, who must

support the dedicated staff, arts workers and operational costs that allow them to be resilient and effective year after year. In these uncertain times, we need the support and leadership of the Council more than ever. Thank you for all that you do.

- **Cilladean Hopkins (They/Them/Theirs)**
Amador County Arts Council, Amador County
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership

Hello my name is Cilladean Hopkins and I'm the outreach coordinator for the Amador County Arts Council. I'm also the lead administrator for the San Joaquin State-Local Partnership Mentorship. Thank you for funding this program. It is vital to increasing the art engagement in San Joaquin County. I have had the opportunity to attend arts activities and events throughout San Joaquin County. It is very rewarding to be able to engage with a vibrant arts community. At all the events I was able to share a little about the mentorship. The response has been unanimous across the board: this community wants and needs an arts council. The people I spoke with were excited about the prospect of an arts council. They were able to see the vision for what an arts council would do for the arts community and community at large. Please consider the continuation of funding for the State-Local Partnership Mentorship: it is essential work.

- **Brittany Delany (She/Her/Hers)**
Orange County Museum of Art, Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action); Arts Education Exposure

Founded in 1962, Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) enriches lives through modern and contemporary art. We provide free access to world-class exhibitions, programs, and community activities. We welcome 220,000 visitors annually, serving over, 4,000 K-12 students—approximately 80% from Title I schools.

Thank you for supporting OCMA with a Creative Youth Development grant in 2024, which supported: 4 weeks of ArtistAs Camp with 4th grade students, two teachers in the District and an OCMA Teaching Artist based in Santa Ana. Each week was a version of showing an artist and the different roles that take, for example Artist as Observer, Artist as Storyteller. They came to OCMA for a tour of the museum to see the art they were learning about during the week, engage with different staff at different departments (educators, installers, etc.). It was a great exposure opportunity for them.

Our additional programs include: School Tours, Family Programs, Artist Talks, and the Orange County Young Curators Program, which offers paid opportunities for high school students to explore curatorial practices and museum careers.

The arts are a solution partner for bolstering mental health, combatting loneliness, ensuring every single person who enters the museum is welcomed and greeted. In light of the L.A. fires crisis, OCMA continues to be free and support artists. We value and need your agency's advocacy to the state to ensure artists and art museums are integrated into recovery funding.

- **Sangeetha (She/Her/Hers)**
Orange County
Current or Former Grantee: Not a current or former grantee; Individual Artists Fellowships; Professional Development; Local Impact
RE: Agenda Item 12. General Public Comment

As someone who started their art journey just six months ago, transitioning from an engineering career to something entirely new, I know how overwhelming and challenging it can be to find your footing as an artist. A grant can be a lifeline for people like me, offering support to learn, grow, and navigate this unfamiliar world. Art requires time, resources, and guidance—things that are hard to come by when you're just starting out. A grant would give me the opportunity to dedicate myself to improving my skills, building my portfolio, and exploring new ways to express myself. It would also allow me to connect with other artists, attend workshops, and find mentorship, which are all critical for someone still finding their place in this field.

Beyond personal growth, a grant helps emerging artists like me give back to the community. With the right support, I could run workshops, collaborate with local groups, or create art that brings people together. Art is powerful—it can tell stories, celebrate cultures, and create spaces where people feel seen and inspired. Having the chance to contribute to that would be incredible.

For someone like me, just starting out and full of uncertainty, a grant is more than financial help. It's a chance to build a foundation for a new career, to grow as an artist, and to make a meaningful impact on the community through creativity.

- **Moisés Esparza (He/Him/His)**
Media Arts Center San Diego, San Diego County
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Hello,

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.

Sincerely,

Moisés Esparza

- **Marsian De Lellis (They/Them/Theirs)**
Los Angeles Performance Practice, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks;
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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

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.

- **Stella**
San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Creative California Communities; Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action); Artists in Schools; Artists in Communities; Arts & Cultural Organizations General Operating Relief; California Relief Fund for Artists and Cultural Practitioners; Impact Projects

Please change the timeline for which funding is distributed. It is VERY difficult for small arts organizations to be expected to begin a ONE YEAR program Oct 1, 2024 but not receive funding until March 2025. That is placing a strain and undue burden on organizations and artists. If it is because it takes the State a long time to distribute funds, then change the awards calendar.

- **Nancy Olivares (She/Her/Hers)**
California Humanities, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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. The (SRN) award supports our Humanities for All Arts & 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.

- **Jessica Fong (She/Her/Hers)**
Stockton Art League, San Joaquin County
Current or Former Grantee: Organizational Development; Participant in State and Local Partner mentorship program with Amador Arts
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Dear council members,

Regarding the State-Local Partnership mentor program and its vital role in rebuilding San Joaquin County.

With a population of over 800k, our county has been without an arts council for 25 years, leaving a void in funding, advocacy, and access to state resources. The original council, founded in 1983 by Larry Walker, Chisato Watanabe, and 15 other dedicated artists and patrons, served for nearly two decades before closing in 2001 due to funding cuts and the challenges of serving a large, diverse region without permanent resources. This loss demonstrates how quickly a community's cultural foundation can unravel without support.

Despite these challenges, the heart of the arts in San Joaquin County has persevered. The Tracy Grand Theatre was renovated into a thriving cultural space, the Haggin Museum underwent significant renovations, and the Manteca Arts Guild was reborn after a decade-long hiatus. Stockton's arts organizations have also endured through the 2008 housing crisis, the 2012 city bankruptcy, and the 2020 pandemic—continuing to perform, create, and exhibit.

The mentorship from Amador Arts Council has been invaluable. This guidance is critical to ensuring our new arts council is sustainable and impactful, avoiding past mistakes and building a lasting foundation for future generations. With your continued support, we can create an arts ecosystem that uplifts local voices, attracts investment, and ensures equitable access to the arts for all.

- **Lana Richards (She/Her/Hers)**
PlayGround, San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks; Impact Projects
RE: Agenda Item 12. General Public Comment

This comment is in response to the proposal to consolidate General Operating, Statewide & Regional Networks (SRN), and Cultural Pathways into one grant application opportunity.

I am writing as a representative of PlayGround, a recipient of the Statewide & 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.

- **Alma Lopez (She/Her/Hers)**
Latino Center of Art and Culture, Sacramento County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts Administrators Pipeline Fellowship;
Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action); Arts & Cultural
Organizations General Operating Relief; Impact Projects

Good afternoon Council Members,

My name is Alma Lopez, Board Chair of the Latino Center of Art and Culture (LCAC). Thank you for your continued support of our organization.

I'd like to highlight the transformative impact of the Arts Administrator Pipeline Fellowship on LCAC. Through this program, we had the privilege of working with Victor Gonzalez, our Arts Administrator Fellow, who has advanced our mission and strengthened our capacity to serve the community.

Working with Victor, we secured \$130,000 through the ArtsHERE grant for two years, to support our capacity building and transition to a new website. Victor is leading this digital upgrade to enhance accessibility, amplify our programs, and engage broader audiences.

Additionally, Victor has developed systems and curriculum for long-term sustainability, streamlining operations and ensuring LCAC's legacy thrives into the future. His dedication, vision, and innovative approach exemplify the power of arts administration in uplifting communities.

Thank you for supporting leaders like Victor Gonzalez and cultural pillars like LCAC.

My gratitude also extends to the Association of Arts Administration Educators, Milena Deleva, and Maclain Hardi-Kurza for their administration of this fellowship.

Sincerely,
Alma Lopez
Board Chair, LCAC

- **Cati Porter (She/Her/Hers)**
Riverside County
Current or Former Grantee: Cultural Pathways; Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action); Individual Artists Fellowships; Statewide and Regional Networks; Organizational Development; Artists in Communities
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

- **Melody (She/Her/Hers)**
Santa Cruz County
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

I vote in favor of offering the Individual Artist Fellowship opportunities again, as there are so many more profound artists to be seen, uplifted, and funded. Please bring this program back, and support a growing list of incredible visionaries and community engaged artists and place-based stewards. Thank you!

- **Alma Robinson (She/Her/Hers)**
California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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

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

- **Milena Deleva (She/Her/Hers)**
Association of Arts Administration Educators, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Arts Administrators Pipeline Fellowship
RE: Agenda Item 12. General Public Comment;

I am writing to express my appreciation for the Arts Administration Fellowship Program (2023-2025), which, one year into its completion, has demonstrated a significant positive impact on fellows' professional development. Both fellows and host organizations have reported success in several key areas, including event production and community engagement, artistic and curatorial achievements, program development and capacity building, fundraising, leadership and professional recognition, creative initiatives, and systems and organizational improvements. The program has been particularly valuable in supporting fellows from areas with limited access to arts and culture resources and a need for mentorship.

- **Trevor Davis**
REACH for Community, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Impact Projects
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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 grassroots 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 Serving CAC's SLPs (organization)**
Coalition of County Arts Agencies
Current or Former Grantee: State-Local Partnership
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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.

- **Alma Robinson (She/Her/Hers)**
California Lawyers for the Arts, San Francisco County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

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

- **Alyssa Villaire (She/Her/Hers)**
Create CA, Los Angeles County
Current or Former Grantee: Statewide and Regional Networks; Creative Youth Development (formerly Youth Arts Action)
RE: Agenda Item 9. VOTING ITEM: FY 2025-2026 Programs

Create CA's entire team was disappointed to learn of the CAC's vote to combine the Statewide & 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.

TAB N

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025



Policy Memorandum

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

DATE: February 28, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: Programs Policy Committee (Gerald Clarke and Caleb Duarte)
RE: FY2025-26 Guidelines Framework

The Programs Policy Committee recommends that Council vote to approve the following program guidelines framework for 2025:

1. Apply these priorities for the following FY25-26 Programs:
 - a. Applicants in the lower quartiles of the Healthy Places Index, to reach historically and systemically underserved communities and work towards greater geographic equity;
 - b. First time grantees of Operating Support, Arts & Youth, and Impact Projects;
 - c. Small organizations with annual Total Revenues (TRs) of \$250,000 or less for Operating Support, Arts & Youth, and Impact Projects.
 - i. Matching funds will be required only from organizations with annual TRs of over \$250,000 (State-Local Partners, Operating Support); and
 - d. Accessibility by means of simplification of the application form.
2. Apply these limits for the following FY25-26 Programs:
 - a. Grantees may be funded for two years on and one year off for Operating Support, Arts & Youth, and Impact Projects, with 2025 counting as Year One.
 - b. Organizations may apply for either Arts & Youth or Impact Projects in 2025.
 - c. TR calculations will not include pass-through or regranting funds.
 - d. Applications ranking below 4 will not be prioritized for funding.
3. Apply the following limits to the Operating Support Program:
 - a. The maximum TR for arts service and network organizations will be set at \$5 million;
 - b. The maximum TR for primarily arts producing organizations will be set at \$1.5 million; and
 - c. Network and arts producing organizations will be funded at levels determined through the allocations process.

2025-26 Program Purposes, Durations, and Maximum Request Amounts

- **Operating Support** (1 year, \$30,000) - Direct funding to arts and cultural organizations and arts service and network organizations in support of ongoing operations
- **Arts & Youth** (1 year, \$25,000) - Supporting arts education and Creative Youth Development projects serving historically and systemically under-resourced youth in school and community-based settings
- **Impact Projects** (1 year, \$25,000) - Supporting collaborative projects between artists and community members that address issues experienced by historically and systemically under-resourced communities
- **Folk & Traditional Arts (Statewide Administering Organization(s))** (2 years, \$1,000,000 each year) - Support to administer funding for artists and arts organizations' work in folk and traditional arts expressions
- **Individual Artist Fellowships (Regional Administering Organizations)** (2 years, variable request amount based on population served) - Supporting the creative practices of California artists at key career levels (emerging, established, or legacy)
- **State-Local Partners** (1 year, \$75,000) - Support and technical assistance for county-designated local arts agencies. *Open only for newly eligible County Arts Agency in Alpine County.*
- **State-Local Partners Mentorship** (1 year, \$50,000) - 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.

Purpose: To provide the guidelines framework for FY 2025-2026 grant programs.

Background: At the January 24 meeting, Council voted on the slate of programs to open in FY 2025-2026, including:

1. Operating Support Program;
2. Arts & Youth Program;
3. Folk and Traditional Arts (Administering Organization program);

4. Individual Artist Fellowships (Administering Organization program);
5. Impact Projects;
6. State – Local Partner Program; and
7. State – Local Partner Mentorship Program.

As noted in the [January memo for Council](#), the committee was informed by [Strategic Framework](#) aspirations, Council and public input, grantee data analysis, the [2020 field scan](#), and CAC's racial equity framework.

The Committee met on February 3rd, 5th, 10th, and 14th to develop and refine the proposed guidelines framework with clearly stated actionable goals that can be operationalized by the agency over the course of the FY25-26 Grant Cycle. The goals are as follows:

1. Reach historically and systemically underserved communities as represented in the lower quartiles of the [Healthy Places Index](#), including rural areas, inland areas, and areas with low historical CAC investment;
2. Increase support for first-time grantees; and
3. Increase support for small organizations.

Upon Council's approval of the 2025 guidelines framework, agency staff will revise program guidelines to implement Council's policy decision(s). This includes:

- Clearly defining roles of collaborating partners (Authorizers, Council, Staff, Public & Partners);
- Integrating data-collection at the first step of the annual grant cycle;
- Simplified and streamlined application(s);
- Targeted outreach and technical assistance prioritizing communities with low CAC funding levels, and
- Support for panelists through the duration of the adjudication process.

In addition, it is important to note that all applications will be ranked based on quality and content of proposal.

After all applications are ranked, allocation scenarios will prioritize those applications that meet the guidelines framework criteria.

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



**CALIFORNIA
ARTS COUNCIL**
A STATE AGENCY

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

California Arts Council
Decision Support Tool

What is the Decision Support Tool?

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

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

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

Who is completing this DST?

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

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

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

PROGRAM POLICY COMMITTEE

Program Policy Recommendations and DST

Gerald Clarke and Caleb Duarte



1

PROGRAM POLICY COMMITTEE 2025/26 Recommendations

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK: GOALS

1. Reaching underserved communities
2. Increasing geographic equity by granting in areas with low CAC investment
3. Increasing support for first-time grantees (including sub-awardees and Cultural Pathways grantees)
4. Supporting small organizations

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK: PRIORITIES

1. Applicants in lower quartiles of Healthy Places Index (HPI) of Operating Support, Arts & Youth, and Impact Projects programs
2. First time grantees of Operating Support, Arts & Youth, and Impact Projects programs
3. Small organizations with Total Revenues (TRs) of \$250,000 or less
4. Making CAC funds more accessible
 - Matching funds only required from organizations with TRs over \$250,000 for State-Local Partners and Operating Support
 - Simplifying the application form

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK: LIMITS

1. Funding only for two consecutive years followed by one year off (Operating Support, Impact Projects, and Arts & Youth)
2. Project-based application limit (Arts & Youth or Impact Projects)
3. Pass-through & regranting funds not counted as TR
4. No prioritization for applications ranking below 4

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK: OPERATING SUPPORT PROGRAM

1. \$5M Maximum Total Revenue for arts service and network organizations
2. \$1.5M Maximum Total Revenue for primarily arts and culture producing organizations

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FRAMEWORK: PROGRAM MAX REQUEST & TERMS

PROGRAM	MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT	TERM LENGTH
Operating Support	Up to \$30,000	1 year
Arts & Youth	Up to \$25,000	1 year
Impact Projects	Up to \$25,000	1 year
Folk & Traditional Arts	Up to \$1M/year	2 years
Individual Artist Fellowships	Variable depending on region	2 years
State-Local Partners	Up to \$75,000 for one year	1 year (only 1 new eligible applicant in 25/26)
State-Local Partners Mentorship	\$50,000	1 year

NEXT STEPS IN CYCLE



2

DECISION-SUPPORT TOOL

WHERE AND HOW DOES THIS LIVE IN THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK?

- **Identify & reach under-resourced communities**
- **Streamline application form to reduce barriers**
- **Prioritize funding for small organizations**
- **Serve individual artists**

WHAT METHODS HAVE BEEN USED TO RESEARCH AND/OR GATHER COMMUNITY INPUT?

The Committee considered

- Public comments
- Input by Council Members
- Field Scan
- Strategic Framework
- CAC's Racial Equity Action Plan
- Analysis of CAC granting history by locations and Total Revenue
- Funding maps of CAC grants including Creative Corps

GRANTEE DATA ANALYSIS & FIELD SCAN

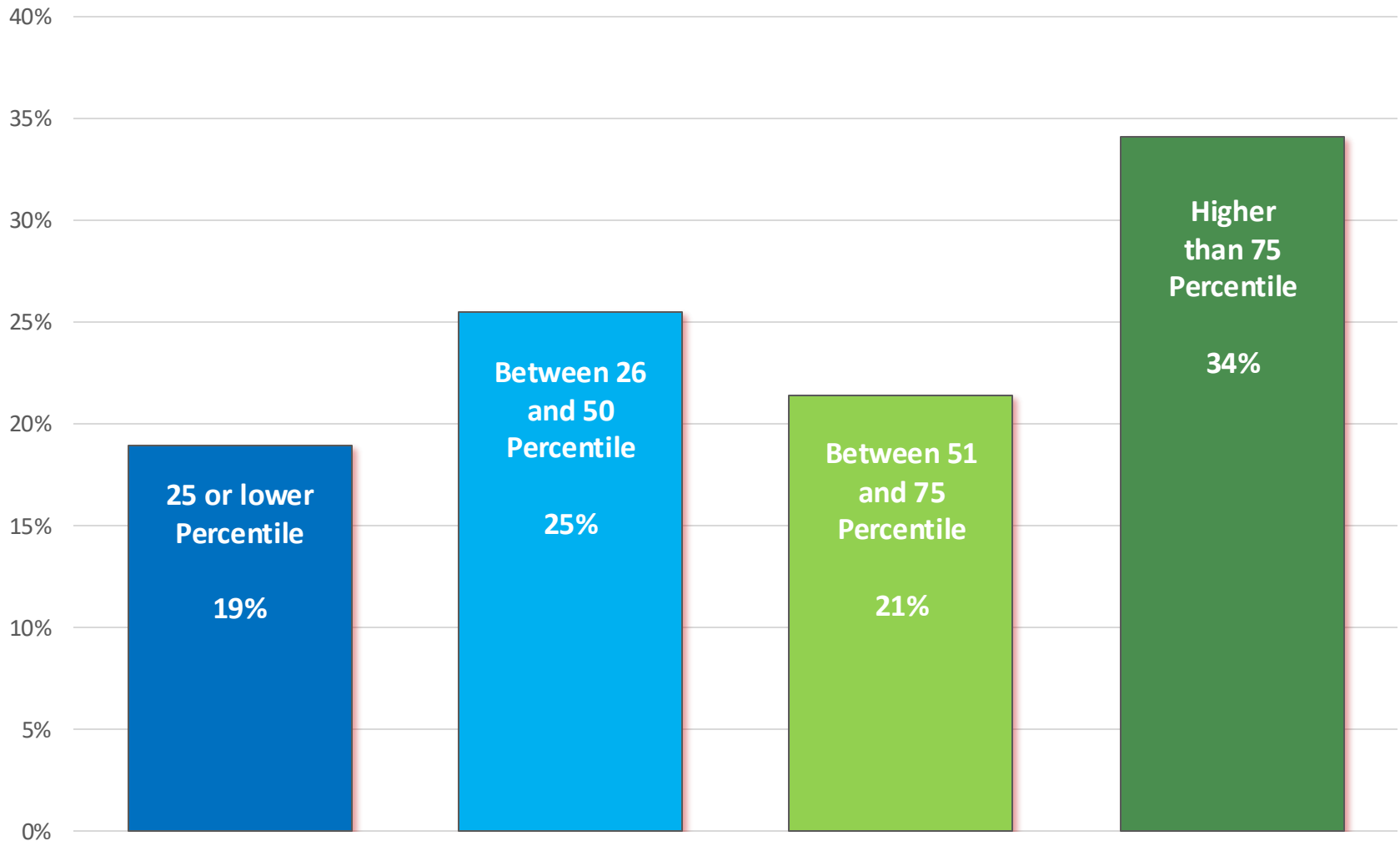
- There are over 16,000 nonprofit arts organizations in CA
- Between 2017 and 2024
 - Over 17,000 applications submitted to CAC
 - Applications represent 3,295 unique organizations
 - 2,096 unique organizations received at least one grant

2024/25 Grants Distribution Compared To Creative Corps Communities Served

- ◆ 2022/24 Creative Corps Communities Served
- 2024/25 CAC Grants business location



DISTRIBUTION OF FY 2023/24 GRANTEE BY HEALTHY PLACES INDEX PERCENTILE



POTENTIAL IMPACT ON THE FIELD

- Potential expansion to first-time applicants & grantees
- Competition within consolidated programs may increase
- Potential shift in where grants are made in the state
- More organizations may be funded
 - by allowing either an Impact Projects or Arts & Youth application
- The two years on, one year off policy will:
 - expand access for new grantees
 - encourage organizations to diversify funding

WHAT MIGHT BE UNINTEDED CONSEQUENCES, DRAWBACKS, OPPORTUNITIES OR DOMINO EFFECTS FROM THIS DECISION AND ACTION?

- May give opportunities to first time grantees, small organizations, and underserved communities
- There may be longstanding grantees, even with very strong proposals, who are not funded if they don't meet prioritization criteria

AMENDMENTS

- Funding only for two consecutive years followed by one year off, for Operating Support Program only (amendment)
- Total Revenue cap for Impact Projects applicants at \$3M (amendment)

Discussion

TAB O

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025



Policy Memorandum

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

DATE: February 28, 2025
TO: All Council Members
FROM: 50th Anniversary Ad-hoc Committee, Roxanne Messina Captor, Nicola Miner
RE: CAC 50th Anniversary Celebration Planning

Purpose: The California Arts Council (CAC) is approaching its 50th anniversary (2026), providing an opportunity to celebrate the agency's legacy, honor key contributors, and showcase the impact of the arts statewide. This memo outlines the Committee's vision and initial planning efforts and welcomes feedback from Council Members and the public on this initial set of ideas.

Background: To mark this milestone, the Chair has convened an ad hoc Council committee to develop a plan to celebrate the agency's impact. The ad hoc Committee is comprised of Chair Messina Captor and Council Member Nicola Minor who serve as co-chairs for this Committee. The committee met on February 6, 2025, with agency staff to discuss the committee's goals, ideas, timeline, and budget.

The Committee's goal is to engage Council Members, legislators, designated partners, and the arts and cultural sector of California in celebrating this significant moment while ensuring financial sustainability through strategic partnerships.

Proposed Activities:

- **CAC Awards Ceremony** – Produce an event honoring past Council Members and artists for their contributions to California's creative and cultural ecosystem.
- **Fundraising & Sponsorship** – Working with the Partnership Committee, and by extension the Council, to develop a funding strategy that does not tap into local assistance funds or public funds in general.
- **Legislative Engagement** – Collaborate with legislators to highlight arts initiatives within their districts.
- **Strategic Partner Involvement** – Encouraging partners to spotlight one of their ongoing projects as part of the celebration.

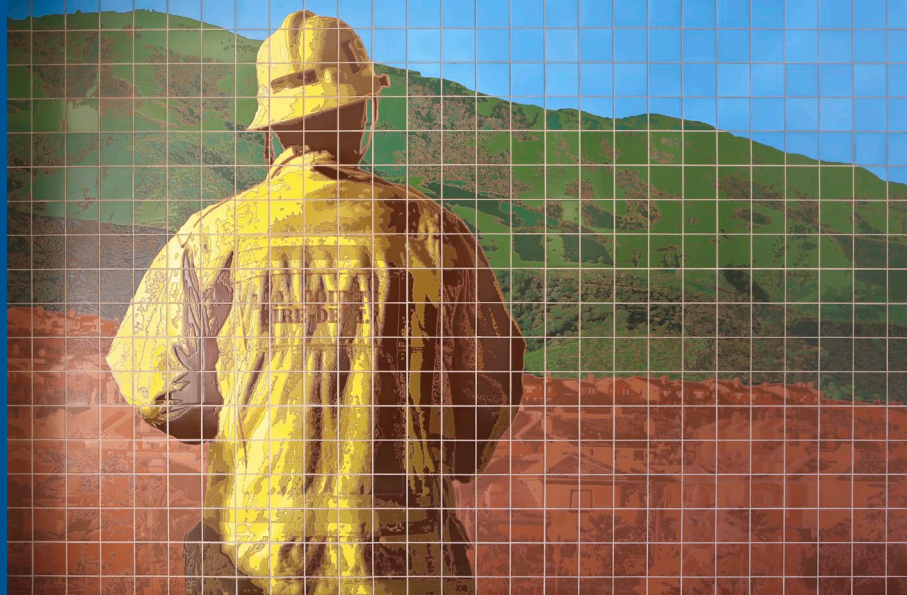
- **Public Visibility & Multimedia** – Develop a designated marketing campaign celebrating this history of the agency. Including posting honoree profiles, partner projects, and event highlights on the CAC website and multimedia storytelling.
- **Fiscal Sponsorship** – Identifying a nonprofit intermediary to facilitate event development and financial oversight.
- **Budget & Event Planning** – Outlining costs and ensuring transparency that state funds will not be used. Issuing a call for event planners and producers to maintain a publicly competitive process.
- **Committee Collaboration** – Hosting an open committee meeting with Partnerships to align efforts and refine plans.
- **Research & Development** – Staff will research past anniversaries and celebrations, then share their findings with the Council to guide the planning of the 50th Anniversary.

Timeline:

- **April 2025** – Convene an open committee meeting with Partnerships to finalize vision and funding strategy.
- **Summer 2025** – Confirm event location, fiscal sponsor, and funding commitments.
- **Fall/Winter 2025** – Execute event planning, outreach, and promotion.
- **2026** – 50th Anniversary celebration event and statewide recognition activities.

Report Prepared by Committee Staff: Danielle Brazell, Executive Director, Kristin Margolis, Director of Program Services, Carissa Gutierrez, Director of Public Affairs in collaboration with the 50th Anniversary Ad-hoc Committee.

Dept. of Arts and Culture: Wildfire Response



California Arts Council
Kristin Sakoda, Director
February, 2025

Keeping Watch by Steve Farley,
Santa Clarita's Fire Station 150.
LA County Civic Art Collection.

LA County
**ARTS &
CULTURE**

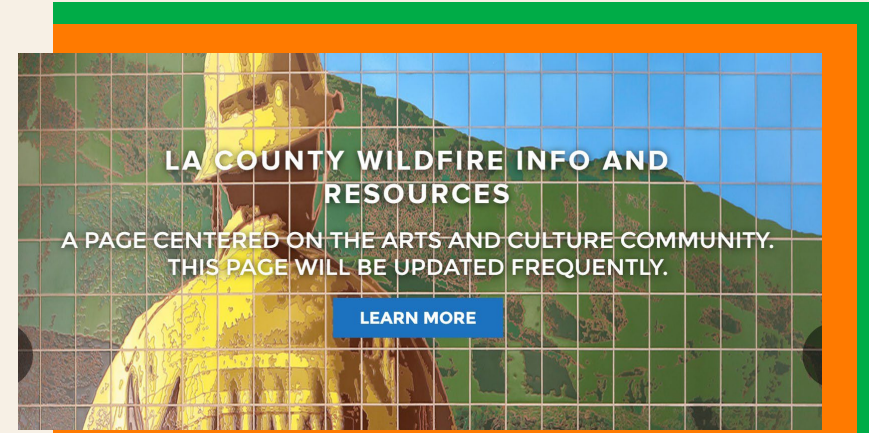
Arts Sector Leadership: Regional and Multi-Agency Coordination

- Launched reoccurring wildfire response call with municipal arts agencies, and arts and disaster relief organizations and providers
- Working with local, state, federal agencies including NCAPER, CERF, FEMA, NEA, Smithsonian, California Arts Council, City of LA, Pasadena, Santa Monica, Arts for LA, Entertainment Community Fund
- Leading Cultural and Natural Resources Disaster Recovery Task Force multi-agency workgroup



Communications: Sharing Emergency Resources with the Field

- Built new Wildfire Digital Resource site for arts and culture sector
- Sharing social media content from County, grantees, arts agencies, community-based organizations, and Department resources
- Virtual Forum: LA County Wildfire Response & Resources on Feb. 4 for the arts field, to highlight local, state, and national resources



Creative Wellbeing: Supporting Arts, Mental Health, Youth and Families

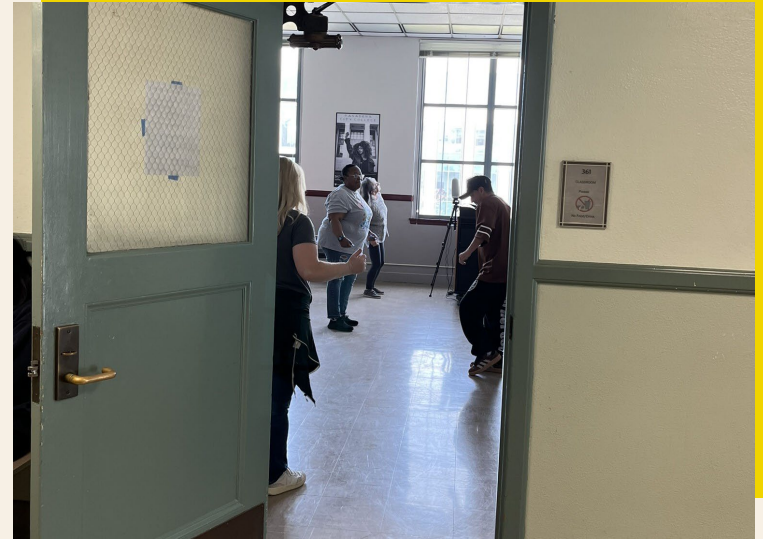
- Providing all 5 Parks “Care Camps” with daily Creative Wellbeing sessions, facilitated by organizations under contract, including:
 - African Soul International
 - Center for Empowerment of Families
 - Homeboy Art Academy
 - Justice for My Sister
 - Spirit Awakening Foundation
 - Arts for Healing and Justice Network members including artworxLA, Give a Beat, No Easy Props, Street Poets, VersaStyle
- Supported Youth Advisory Board of the LA Suicide Prevention Network in processing the fires and sharing practices for using the arts for wellbeing
- Arts and Culture activities continue at Afflerbaugh, Kirby, Paige, Rockey, Kilpatrick, Nidorf, and Los Padrinos



Top: Care Camp activities at The Arboretum, 1/20/25. Bottom: Day of healing arts, facilitated by LASPN Youth Advisory Board, Arts for Healing and Justice Network, and Upward Together, 1/19/24.

Arts Education: Support for Educators and Impacted School Districts

- Outreach made to Pasadena Unified, Santa-Monica-Malibu Unified, and LAUSD arts leaders to offer support
- At Pasadena Unified, Arts Ed Collective coaches and Creative Wellbeing artists provided trauma-informed and healing centered practices and workshops at the all-district staff meeting for planning reopening and recovery, on request



All-district event for Pasadena teachers, 1/22/25. Photo by Elisabeth Nails.

Research & Evaluation: Assessing Impact, Gathering Data

- Our teams are assessing preliminary impact of the disaster on arts and culture
- Identifying damaged Civic Art works and grantees located within and near fire zones that may be impacted
- Collaborated with the Smithsonian on a rapid report on impact to cultural heritage



Grants & Professional Development: Supporting Grantees

- Implementing grant flexibility by giving space for orgs to recalibrate their grant-funded projects
- In contact with grantees impacted by fires and those engaged in mutual aid
- Providing updates on available resources for grantees and artists
- Supporting arts sector agency coordination calls and leading plans for upcoming resource webinar Feb 4



Civic Art: Supporting Artists, Communities & the County Collection

- Assessing damage to the County Civic Art Collection and where existing park projects are delayed, i.e. Charles White Park in Altadena
- Co-host Instagram Live events: “Preservation Mutual Aid: For Fire and Water Damaged Artwork and Cherished Belongings”
- Collaborating to organize in-person conservation workshops for artists and communities and their artworks, collections, and treasures

Los Angeles County
ARTS & CULTURE

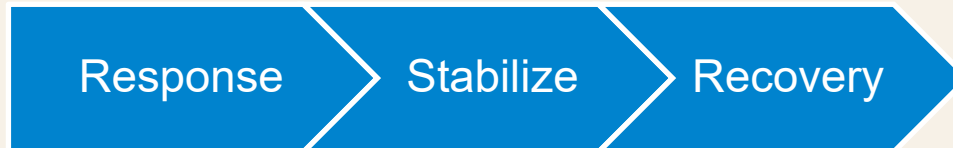
Live Q&As



**Preservation Mutual Aid:
For Fire and Water Damaged Artwork
and Cherished Belongings**

Looking Ahead: Needs for Relief and Recovery

- LA's arts and culture community has been significantly impacted by the fires
- Artists, creative workers, and culture bearers—working across the arts and creative economy in music, film, entertainment, visual art, dance, and more—were affected
- Loss of artworks, studios, collections, history, tangible and intangible cultural heritage
- Business interruption for cultural organizations, creative businesses, and entrepreneurs
- Arts and culture can be engaged to play an important role in the whole recovery of communities: healing, mental health, youth, education, beautification, creative place-keeping/making, cultural asset mapping, community engagement, and rebuilding
- Support, resources, and advocacy for arts and culture are needed to ensure full recovery



TAB P

California Arts Council | Public Meeting | 02/28/2025

2025-2026 FY Grants Outreach Plan

Carissa Gutierrez | Director of Public Affairs | Carissa.Gutierrez@arts.ca.gov



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Goals & Objectives
- Timeline & Overview
- Phase 1: Awareness & Launch
- Phase 2: Technical Assistance & Engagement
- Phase 3: Final Push & Application Support
- Metrics & Evaluation

Goals & Objectives

- Framework Priorities
 - Reach historically underserved communities
 - Increase geographic equity in grant distribution
 - Support first-time applicants
 - Sustain/increase small organization funding
- Maximize statewide awareness & engagement
- Provide accessible technical assistance
- Leverage partnerships for greater outreach
- Ensure equitable access to resources

Timeline and Overview



Phase 1

•Awareness & Launch
(March 28 – April 15)

Phase 2

•Technical Assistance
& Engagement (April
16 – May 15)

Phase 3

•Final Push &
Application Support
(May 16 – June 5)

Awareness and Launch

Phase 1: March 28-April 15

Phase 1: Awareness & Launch

- Grant season launch announcement across platforms
- Website updates: guidelines, FAQs, deadlines
- Workshop curriculum development
- Statewide email campaign to applicants & partners
- Social media campaign & digital outreach
- Short videos, blog resources
- April 11 Council Meeting: Panelist Pool approval

Technical Assistance and Engagement

Phase 2: April 16-May 15

Technical Assistance Plan Overview

- Goal: Ensure equitable access to application resources
- TA Toolkit:
 - Step-by-step guides, video tutorials
 - FAQs & translated materials
- Open office hours schedule (drop-in)
- Regional partnerships for workshops
- April 22-23: CFTA Arts + Culture Summit engagement

Virtual TA Webinars

- March 26: CAC Partners Webinar (promo toolkit & TA overview)
- April 30: Grant Application 101
- May 8: Budget & Narrative Tips
- May 16: Final Steps & Common Mistakes


Office Hours


- Office Hours will be program-specific and general
- Facilitated by CAC Program Specialists

Regional In-Person Workshops


 **Capitol Region:**
May 1 – Sacramento

 **Bay Area Region:**
May 2 – Oakland/Richmond
/Berkeley / Hayward

 **Northern California:**
May 6 – Redding

 **Central California:**
May 7 – Visalia
May 9 – Mariposa

 **Central Coast California**
May 8 – San Benito/ Santa
Maria

 **Southern California:**
May 13 – East Los Angeles
May 14 – Northern Santa
Barbara

 **Inland Empire**
May 20 – San Bernardino
May 21 – Imperial
(Calexico)

**all dates and final locations are
subject to change*

Final Push and Application Support

Phase 3: May 16 - June 5

Additional Office Hours

- May 23-24: Evening hours (5 PM - 7 PM PT)
- May 28-30: Office hours (12 PM - 2 PM PT)
- June 3-4: Last-minute troubleshooting
- Final email reminders & accessibility office hours

Phase 3: Final Push & Application Support

- Social Media Countdown Campaign
- Final Tips Webinar for last-minute Q&A
- June 20 Council Meeting: Cycle reflection/update

Post-Deadline Support

- June 6 – July 11 Actions:
- Applicant next steps & review timeline
- Panelist training & selection updates

Metrics and Evaluation

- Establish baseline metrics (24/25 geographic distribution, budget size, etc.)
- Implement participant and applicant surveys
- Align with application data collections
- Prepare, analyze and synthesize survey results
 - Compare applicant and grantee lists to participants and 24/25 available data



QUESTIONS?

Now's the time

Stay in touch



Sign up for ArtBeat!



Follow us

TAB Q

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This document will be
provided at a later date prior
to the Council Meeting