STATE-LOCAL PARTNER MENTORSHIP

2025 Grant Guidelines
Deadline: June 5, 2025

The mission of the California Arts Council, a state agency, is to strengthen arts, culture, and creative expression as the tools to cultivate a better California for all.

Learn more at **www.arts.ca.gov**

STATE-LOCAL PARTNER MENTORSHIP

DEADLINE: June 5, 11:59 PM
Grant Request Amount: $50,000
Grant Activity Period: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026

Apply at: calartscouncil.smartsimple.com

Please refer to the California Arts Council Grants Manual for all policies, procedures, and resources for applicants and grantees.

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Program Timeline

Application Opens	April 2, 2025
Application Deadline	June 5, 2025
Panel Review	Approx. July - August 2025
Funding Decision	Approx. September 2025
Funding Notification	Approx. September 2025
Grant Activity Start	October 1, 2025
Estimated Arrival of Funds	Approx. January 2026 - March 2026
Grant Activity End	September 30, 2026
Final Report Deadline	October 30, 2026

Eligibility

Organizations eligible to apply include:

1. Nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), California organizations
2. Units of municipal, county or Tribal governments
3. Fiscally sponsored organizations

Non-eligible applicants include:

1. Organizations that are registered and primarily operate as for-profit corporations/entities, even if they have a fiscal sponsor.
   a. This includes LLCs and any for-profit entities (including "charitable arms or branches").
2. Non-art organizations that do not offer ongoing art activities and/or services
3. Individuals
4. State agencies
5. Federal agencies
6. Elementary and secondary schools (public, private, charter)
7. School districts
8. County offices of education
9. Parent-teacher associations (PTAs)
10. Booster clubs

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant organizations and fiscal sponsors must meet the requirements below:

1. Have a principal place of business in California and a California address.
2. Have a minimum two-year history of consistent arts programming and/or services **prior** to the application deadline.

3. Demonstrate proof of nonprofit status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or section 23701d of the California Revenue and Taxation Code.
   a. Eligible applicant organizations without non-profit status, please see *Fiscal Sponsor Requirements* in the [2025 Grants Manual](#).
4. Have "active status" with the California Secretary of State (SOS) showing evidence of "good standing" at the time of application.
5. Applicants must be current grantees in the CAC State-Local Partners Program.

Eligible Request Amounts

Applicant organizations can request up to $50,000 for a one-year Grant Activity Period.

Funding Restrictions

- For applicant organizations with total revenue **below** $250,000, there are no funding restrictions.
- For applicant organizations with total revenue **above** $250,000, the sum of requests during the same year of funding cannot exceed **50%** of the total revenue from the most recently completed fiscal year.

Matching Funds

Matching funds are not required for this grant.

Background & Purpose

The State-Local Partner Mentorship (SLP-M) program is intended to support the establishment of a county-designated local arts agency in each of the three counties in which no such agency has currently been identified (Glenn, Kings, San Joaquin). Grant funds will go to three existing State-Local Partners (SLP) to foster the development of new SLPs in these counties.

A **local arts agency** is defined as the official county-designated organization that supports arts and cultural activity in service to individuals and communities throughout an entire county. Local arts agencies provide financial support, services, and/or other programming to a variety of arts organizations, individual artists, and the community as a whole. A local arts agency can be an agency of local government, a nonprofit organization, or a hybrid of the two.

The CAC's [Strategic Framework](#), adopted in 2019, indicates aspirational areas that will be directly addressed by this grant program:

- State-Local Partner Capacity Building

Increase technical assistance and training to SLPs that meets the unique needs of each organization, as identified by research and evaluation. Ensure that SLP contracts are written to require adherence to key CAC policies and expectations, clearly outlining the role of the state-county partnership. Develop strategies to align SLP priorities with the priorities of the CAC, while allowing for flexibility and self-determination. Support the development and implementation of local plans that result in consistent quality and equity of services across counties.

- Geographic Equity

Explore how to best address grantmaking equity for the disparate regions of the state. Utilize data analysis to assess present-day regional disparities among CAC grantees. Seek guidance from existing funding models that address how to identify and give preference to disadvantaged communities.

The CAC expects that an active SLP will be established in the identified county within 2-3 years, either as a unit of County government or an independent 501(c)(3), and that the SLP-M will mentor them through their first two years of arts programming and services, after which the mentee organization could qualify for an SLP grant independently. SLP-M grantees may reapply for 2nd and 3rd year funding through this program in order to fully implement this work.

Program Goals

- Grantees will be required to accomplish the following within the Grant Activity Period:
- Convene a standing committee of community members and stakeholders to support development of new SLP structure and strategic framework.
- Model equity practices and principles in the development of new SLP mission, vision, programming, and services.
- Identify and retain a dedicated staff member to lead new SLP and provide mentorship to that individual.
- Identify and maintain an accessible public office space for the new SLP.
- Create and implement a realistic operating budget for new SLP, with appropriate portion of grant funds going directly to support new SLP
- Supply anticipated outcomes for a one-year grant and outline any next steps anticipated to occur beyond the grant activity period to fulfill the goals of the grant program.
- All activities to be funded by the CAC must occur within the one-year Grant Activity Period (see Timeline).
- Consult/convene with CAC and other SLP-M grantees around best practices, if applicable.

Reporting Requirements

- Reports are filled out and submitted within the grant application portal, using the CAC provided format. The application owner will receive an email when reports are available in the Requires Attention section of the application owner's account.
- Provide a final report summarizing grant-funded activities and accomplishments within 30 days of the end of the grant activity period (or by the stated deadline). Grantees that do not submit reports will be ineligible to apply for future funding opportunities.

Grant Application Questions & Review Criteria

Application questions and required documents pertaining to each review criterion are included below. Detailed instructions are available at calartscouncil.smartsimple.com.

Application Summary

Provide a brief summary of your proposal indicating how CAC grant funds would be used. This description will be used to introduce your proposal to the review panel. If funded, this description may be used as the Scope of Work in your grant contract and will be binding. It may also be edited by CAC and used to summarize your proposal in public documents. Please review the What We Do Not Fund resource document before completing this section.

Centering Equity and Accessibility

The application must demonstrate your organization's experience, capacity, and commitment to engaging and uplifting historically under-resourced, excluded, and erased artists,

audiences, communities, and cultural practices. This dedication should be evident throughout the proposal.

The application must also demonstrate that the programs, services, information, and facilities—including online spaces—will be accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as those who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind, or who have physical, visual, developmental, learning, or cognitive disabilities, as well as mental or chronic illnesses.

Application Questions and Required Documents

1. Describe your organization's equity and accessibility goals.
2. What does your organization do to achieve these goals?
3. How does your organization determine progress in achieving these goals?
4. Describe your organization's approach to ensuring that people with disabilities are able to fully participate in all programs and services.

Organizational Capacity and Readiness

Key project personnel must demonstrate a history of experience working at their current SLP or another local arts agency in the areas of strategic planning, organizational development, and/or organizational leadership. Applicant organization must demonstrate ability to consistently achieve goals of the SLP program, including providing robust local arts programming, services, and networking; making significant impact in the community; demonstrating strong management and leadership; and demonstrating commitment to equity and accessibility both internally in organizational policy and culture, and externally via programming and community engagement.

Application Questions and Required Documents

1. Provide a brief biography for each key individual (artistic, technical, or administrative) involved in your organization. Include name, title, and relevant experience. [Demographic information and identity indicators optional.]
2. Please provide a brief history of your organization and its success in consistently achieving the goals of the SLP program.
3. Complete a two-year budget snapshot table. Provide revenue and expense amounts. Address any significant changes in line items from one year to the next and explain anticipated surpluses or deficits.
4. Please provide the total amount of pass-through funds your organization manages. This includes grant funds passed to fiscally sponsored organizations. This total should not be included in your organizational Total Revenue calculation.
5. Please provide the total amount of funds used for regranting in the field. This total should not be included in your organizational Total Revenue calculation for this application.
6. Provide no more than three (3) samples that best portray your organization and its work. These may include artistic work, press materials, flyers, brochures, programs, newsletters, audio, video and other marketing pieces. Samples should be within the past two years and relevant to this grant opportunity.

Program Design and Implementation

Applicant organization must propose a clear plan to support the development of a new SLP in a partnering county, including commitment of key personnel to the project, relationships with stakeholders in that county, a plan for community engagement and organizational development within the Grant Activity Period, and a budget that realistically supports the proposed plan of action.

Application Questions and Required Documents

1. Describe your plans for developing and mentoring a new SLP in a partnering county, including the roles of key personnel and relationships with stakeholders in that county. Indicate how your organization plans to achieve each of the following requirements within the Grant Activity Period:
    a. Convene a standing committee of community members and stakeholders to support development of new SLP structure and strategic framework.
    b. Model equity practices and principles in the development of new SLP mission, vision, programming, and services.
    c. Identify and retain a dedicated staff member to lead new SLP and provide mentorship to that individual.
    d. Identify and maintain an accessible public office space for the new SLP.
    e. Create and implement a realistic operating budget for new SLP, with appropriate portion of grant funds going directly to support new SLP.
    f. By the end of the Grant Activity Period, establish an active SLP in the identified county, either as a unit of County government or an independent 501(c)(3), and mentor them through their first two years of arts programming and services.
    g. Obtain resolution from the county board of supervisors naming the new SLP as the official partner of the CAC in that county.
2. Letter of Support (Optional): Provide a signed letter from the County Administrator or Board of Supervisors in the county in which the new SLP will be established indicating support for the establishment of an SLP and the commitment of the County to partner in that work.
3. Complete a detailed project budget, including all expenses relevant to the stated project activities, and include rates of pay that appropriately compensate the labor of all individuals working on the project. Provide details for each line item to be funded by this grant, including an appropriate portion of grant funds going directly to support new SLP.

Staff Assistance

Before contacting staff, check [FAQs](#) to see if application questions can be answered. If staff assistance is still required for guidance or clarification, email is the best way to contact Program Specialists. **We recommend that you contact staff well in advance of the deadline to ensure you can be accommodated.** People who identify as Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind, or have difficulty speaking may dial 711 to reach the California Relay Service (CRS). Large print is available upon request. Translation services are also available upon request.

Organizations seeking technical assistance should contact:

Jonathan Estrada
he/him
Arts Program Specialist
California Arts Council
slpmentorgrant@arts.ca.gov