

Fiscal Year: 2021-22

Department: California Arts Council

Budget Request: California Creative Corps Pilot Program

Budget Request Description: The California Arts Council (CAC) requests \$60 million one-time General Fund in 2021-22 to implement the California Creative Corps Pilot Program. The Governor's Budget proposal included a total of \$15 million one-time General Fund (\$5 million in 2020-21 and \$10 million in 2021-22) to implement this program. This request removes the \$5 million in 2020-21 and brings the total amount available in 2021-22 to \$60 million. To effectively implement the program, it is requested that the funding provided is able to be expended or encumbered through June 30, 2024, and up to one percent of the funding may be used for administrative costs.

California Creative Corps is an economic and workforce recovery pilot program intended to fuel positivity, regain public trust, and inspire safe and healthy behavior across California's diverse populations through artist-led messaging disseminated via a media outreach and engagement campaign. This program will provide grants to local, regional, and statewide organizations in all 58 counties to fund unemployed and underemployed artists to create public awareness messages in support of civic engagement and community participation in multiple priority areas including:

- **Pandemic Recovery:** Public health messaging that supports social and personal wellbeing as California begins the recovery process from the pandemic. Most urgently, this pilot will support the necessary long-term pandemic recovery within California's most disproportionately impacted communities. Disproportionately impacted communities are more likely to experience long-term trauma and cannot be left behind in the healing and recovery process.
- **Environmental, Civic, and Social Engagement:** Public messaging that supports water and energy conservation; emergency preparedness, relief, and recovery; social justice; and environmental justice. This pilot reflects a longstanding value of the CAC of leveraging arts networks that have supported disaster recovery efforts, social crises, and conservation goals.

Using a variety of art forms, including visual, performing, and traditional arts, artists will create public messaging that effectively advances positive community outcomes by prioritizing locally-focused, contextually, and culturally sensitive work. Projects will cultivate trust, belonging, community cohesion, and interdependence—particularly in communities that are most impacted. Messaging will be created regionally by trusted community messengers and be representative and locally appropriate. The program will demonstrate culturally rooted creative strategies to advance civic communication, while bringing resources to a sector that has been disproportionately economically impacted by COVID-19, including artists who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) that have experienced the highest rates of unemployment in the arts sector (COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on the Arts, 2021).

Program Design: The CAC will implement a statewide grant program with an accompanying media, outreach, and engagement campaign. This program will include training and technical assistance for grantees to apply for the grants. Grants will be provided to local, regional, and statewide arts organizations that will in turn re-grant funds to local arts and social service organizations, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ groups, and individual artists. CAC outreach will focus on vulnerable communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and environmental impacts. Grants will provide economic support to artists, ambassadors, and cultural workers who will create awareness messages and public engagement in support of civic engagement and community participation.

During the pilot, the CAC will welcome opportunities for private sector collaboration across multiple sectors. Looking to the future, the evaluation of the pilot's impact may yield a process for future Creative Corps expansion. The CAC Racial Equity practices prioritize evaluation and data collection.

Program administration will include developing a methodology for gathering evidence that is rigorously utilized throughout the grant implementation, and made available to the public.

Even with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, California's arts ecosystem is among the most powerful and culturally rich in the world and should be considered, invested in, and leveraged. The CAC is the only State of California department or agency that provides funding for local artists who will develop and deliver unique messaging and public engagement necessary to support recovery, preparedness, conservation, engagement, and overall wellbeing in all California communities. Artists and the arts sector can uniquely help people connect, cope, and be well now and in the long term.

References and Resources:

- COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on the Arts Research Update May 4, 2020. (2021, March 22). Americans for the Arts. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/americans-for-the-arts-news/covid-19-impact>
- Farther, Faster, Together: How Arts and Culture Can Accelerate Environmental Programs. ArtPlace America. (2018, February) <https://www.artplaceamerica.org/view/pdf?f=/sites/default/files/public/pictures/environment.pdf>
- Culture Shock: COVID-19 and the Cultural and Creative Sectors. (2020, September 7). Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. <http://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/culture-shock-covid-19-and-the-cultural-and-creative-sectors>
- Lost Art: Measuring COVID-19's Devastating Impact on America's Creative Economy. (2020, August). Brookings Institution. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/20200810_Brookingsmetro_Covid19-and-creative-economy
- The Color of Coronavirus: Covid-19 Deaths by Race and Ethnicity in the U.S. (2020, 2021 ongoing) APM Research Lab. <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/covid/deaths-by-race>
- California Arts Emergency Preparedness Initiative: State-Local Partners County Workshops Report. (2019, November) California Arts Council. <https://view.publitas.com/ca-arts-council/2019-cac-slp-emergency-preparedness-report/page/1>
- Press Release: California Arts Council Awards \$2 Million in Grants for Innovations + Intersections Pilot Program (2020, October) https://arts.ca.gov/press_release/california-arts-council-awards-2-million-in-grants-for-innovations-intersections-pilot-program/
- Creative Impact: The Arts and the California Challenge. (2020, February) California Arts Council. <https://arts.ca.gov/about/how-we-think/>