



**Civic Arts Commission  
Grants Subcommittee  
Friday, November 22, 2024  
3:00 PM**

**PUBLIC ADVISORY: THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH VIDEOCONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE**

To access the meeting remotely: Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone, or Android device: Please use this URL <https://cityofberkeley-info.zoomgov.com/j/1608531790>. If you do not wish for your name to appear on the screen, then use the drop-down menu and click on "rename" to rename yourself to be anonymous. To request to speak, use the "raise hand" icon by rolling over the bottom of the screen. To join by phone: Dial **1-669-254-5252** and enter Meeting ID: **160 853 1790** If you wish to comment during the public comment portion of the agenda, Press \*9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair.

To submit an e-mail comment during the meeting to be read aloud during public comment, email [civicsarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicsarts@berkeleyca.gov) with the Subject Line in this format: "PUBLIC COMMENT ITEM ##." Please observe a 150-word limit. Time limits on public comments will apply

## **Agenda**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

### **2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of Huchiun (*Hooch-yoon*), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (*Cho-chen-yo*) speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona (*Vuh-roh-nuh*) Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley residents have and continue to benefit from the use

and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan (*Lih-Shawn*) Tribe and create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this Land Acknowledgement

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT** (for items not on the agenda)

### **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS WITH POSSIBLE ACTION**

- a) DISCUSSION: Draft FY26 Individual Artist Projects grant guidelines (Attachment 1)  
From: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
Public Comment
  
- b) DISCUSSION: Draft FY26 Community Festivals grant guidelines (Attachment 2)  
From: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
Public Comment
  
- c) DISCUSSION: Draft FY26 Arts Programs grant guidelines (Attachment 3)  
From: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
Public Comment
  
- d) DISCUSSION: Draft FY26 General Operating Support grant guidelines (Attachment 4)  
From: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
Public Comment

### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

#### **Attachments:**

- 1) Draft FY26 Individual Artist Projects grant guidelines
- 2) Draft FY26 Community Festivals grant guidelines
- 3) Draft FY26 Arts Programs grant guidelines
- 4) Draft FY26 General Operating Support grant guidelines

Staff Contact:  
Hilary Amnah  
Grants Program Lead  
Berkeley, CA 94704

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hamnah@berkeleyca.gov

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: e-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required, but if included in any communication to a City board, commission or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission or committee for further information.

**ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION:**

**To request disability-related accommodations to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Compliance Program by phone (510) 981-6418 or by TTY (510) 981-6347 at least three business days before the meeting date.**



# FY26 Individual Artist Projects Grant

## City of Berkeley | Civic Arts Grant Guidelines

[APPLY HERE](#)

### Important Dates (Subject to change)

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Applications Open                                     | January 6, 2025                    |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>                           | <b>February 19, 2025, 11:59 pm</b> |
| Grant Review Panel Meeting                            | May 2025                           |
| Grants Subcommittee Meeting – Funding Recommendations | June 6, 2025                       |
| Civic Arts Commission Meeting – Grant Awards Approval | June 25, 2025, 6:00 pm             |
| Grant Activity Period                                 | July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026       |
| Final Report Due                                      | July 30, 2026                      |

## 1. OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Purpose – Why these grants are offered.

The Civic Arts program supports a culturally vibrant and diverse arts ecosystem within the City of Berkeley by funding grants to artists, arts organizations, and festivals.

Individual Artist Project grants support artists living in Berkeley with project-based funding. Projects must include original work created during the Grant Activity Period and a public presentation that engages Berkeley residents in a meaningful way.

### 1.2 Land Acknowledgment

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochoyeno-speaking Ohlone people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley’s incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

### 1.3 Cultural Equity Statement

The City of Berkeley Civic Arts program commits to equity within the arts and culture sector by consistently evaluating its programs and practices. The City recognizes the multiple benefits the arts provide, regardless of race, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Beyond ensuring access to the arts, the City of Berkeley commits to supporting artists and arts organizations that represent diverse cultures, life experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. The City supports the empowerment of perspectives and identities that have been historically and systemically underrepresented.

### 1.4 Eligibility – Who can apply?

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicant is an individual artist and *not* applying as a partnership, group, or collective
- Applicant is a resident of the City of Berkeley
- Applicant is an artist working in film and new media, multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary arts, social practice, or visual arts
- Applicant is 18 years of age or older

**NEW:** This grant category is discipline specific. **You may only apply once in either FY26 or FY27 and must select the primary artistic discipline that aligns with your proposed project.**

The following disciplines will be considered over the next two grant cycles:

#### **FY26 (*this application period*):**

- Film and New Media
- Multidisciplinary / Interdisciplinary Arts
- Social practice
- Visual Arts

#### **FY27 (*next application period*):**

- Dance
- Folk and Traditional Arts
- Literary Arts
- Music
- Theater

### 1.5 Eligibility – Who can't apply?

- City of Berkeley employees employed at the time of the application or during any part of the Grant Activity Period
- Full-time students enrolled at the time of the application or during any part of the Grant Activity Period
- Individual Artist Project grantees from the last two grant cycles (previous two Fiscal Years)
- Artists with proposed projects in dance, folk and traditional arts, literary arts, music, or theater
- Individuals who do not live in the City of Berkeley
- Organizational applicants (for example, festivals, nonprofit organizations, businesses, etc.)

### 1.6 Who is encouraged to apply?

- Artists in any phase of their artistic career including emerging, midcareer, and established artists
- Individuals representing systemically marginalized identities, including but not limited to: Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian); Asian; Black, African American; California Native American, Indigenous, Tribal; Disabled; Elders, Seniors; Latinx, Chicax; LGBTQIA2S+; Low Income; Neuro-Divergent; Pacific Islander; People of Color; Trans and/or Non-Binary People; Immigrants (Documented and/or Undocumented), Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants; Unhoused; Unsheltered; Veterans; or Youth 18 years of age or older

## 1.7 Grant Amount and Investment

The Individual Artist Project grant is a **\$5,000** award.

Ten (10) awards will be given in this grant category, totaling a \$50,000 investment for individual artists.

Final award amounts are contingent upon City Council's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and Civic Arts Grants allocation; amounts are subject to change.

## 1.8 Funding Use – Grant money can be used for these things.

A project budget is not required for this application. Examples of eligible expenses for this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Artist fees
- Equipment rentals
- Living expenses during the Grant Activity Period (for example, rent, utilities, childcare, etc.)
- Stipends for collaborators
- Supplies and materials needed for the project
- Venue or studio fees

## 1.9 Funding Use Restrictions – Grant money can't be used for these things.

Grant funds may not be used for the following:

- Expenses incurred outside of the Grant Activity Period
- Joint projects funded by two or more Individual Artist Project awards
- Political advocacy or lobbying
- Project production and presentation activities outside of the City of Berkeley
- Projects for which the main intent is curation, archiving, or journalism

## 1.10 Project Requirements

- All project components must be completed within the Grant Activity Period (July 1 – June 30)
- Public presentation. A public presentation of the new artwork within the City of Berkeley is required. The presentation must engage a defined Berkeley audience/community in a meaningful way.
  - Presentations may include, but are not limited to: performing arts productions; visual art presentations, exhibitions or public art projects; social practice projects; media arts or film screenings; literary readings; or artist talks.

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

### 2.1 Grant Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted electronically before the deadline. The Individual Artist Project grant application consists of the following components:

- Proof of residency
  - Examples include a current lease agreement, utility bill, or property tax bill.
  - Unhoused and unsheltered artists may provide a letter from a Berkeley-based shelter or a Berkeley-based homeless service program as proof of Berkeley residency.
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (C.V.)
- Work samples and descriptions
- Narrative questions

### 2.2 Grants Management System

All application materials must be submitted electronically using the Office of Economic Development's grants management system, [Submittable](#). Technical assistance creating a Submittable account or navigating this platform is available through [Submittable's Customer Support](#).

Please note: Paper or physical applications are not accepted at this time.

### 2.3 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for grant program-specific inquiries is available from Civic Arts staff by email, phone or virtual appointment. Technical assistance can provide guidance around eligibility, application requirements, or review criteria.

Application resources available on the [Civic Arts website](#) are a FAQs (frequently asked questions) page and a recording of the Grant Program Webinar.

Staff contact: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
[hamnah@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:hamnah@berkeleyca.gov)  
510-981-7539  
[Schedule a virtual appointment](#)

### 2.4 Accommodations for Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations to apply should make their requests to the Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). Staff works with the Disability Compliance Program ([ada@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:ada@berkeleyca.gov)) to review and fulfill the request. **Disability-related accommodation requests must be made at least 72 hours in advance of deadlines or meetings.** TTY users can dial 7-1-1 to be connected to a specially trained communications assistant from a [state relay provider](#).

### 2.5 Translation Services

Translation services for the grant guidelines are available upon request. Requests can be emailed to Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). If the application is submitted in a language other than English, a third-party translation service will be used to translate application answers into English for Grant Review Panelists.

### 3. EVALUATION AND SCORING

#### 3.1 Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by Grant Review Panelists using the following criteria:

##### **Artistic Practice and Experience (30%)**

- Work samples demonstrate high-quality or promise
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) demonstrates high-quality or promise through its artistic history and accomplishments
- Reasoning for how funding will enhance, develop, and/or transform the applicant’s artistic practice is compelling

##### **Project Narrative (30%)**

- Project goals, plan, timeline, and how funds will be spent demonstrate clarity and feasibility
- Project processes demonstrate originality, skill, and depth of concepts
- Proposed final work is impactful for the artist and City of Berkeley

##### **Cultural Equity (30%)**

- Applicant clearly conveys how their personal experiences and/or identities are rooted in and reflective of historically marginalized communities
- Applicant demonstrates an appropriate relationship between their creative practice and a historically marginalized community(ies)

##### **Community Impact (10%)**

- A venue for the required public presentation is identified; feasibility of using identified venue is articulated
- Proposed public presentation is appropriate to the project goals and engages a defined Berkeley audience/community in a meaningful way

#### 3.2 Scoring Scale

Grant Review Panelists use the following scale to assess how well the application meets the review criteria. Numerical values are calculated to the appropriate weight for each criterion.

|          |                       |  |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>5</b> | <b>Exceptional</b>    | meets review criteria to the highest degree                          |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Strong</b>         | strongly meets review criteria                                       |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Good</b>           | adequately meets review criteria; average                            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Fair</b>           | moderately meets some of the review criteria; needs some improvement |
| <b>1</b> | <b>Underdeveloped</b> | minimally meets the review criteria; greatly needs improvement       |
| <b>0</b> | <b>Weak</b>           | does not meet any elements of the review criteria                    |

## 4. REVIEW PROCESS

### 4.1 Eligibility Screening

Civic Arts staff reviews each application submitted before the deadline for eligibility. Eligible applications are evaluated by a Grant Review Panel in accordance with the review criteria.

### 4.2 Grant Review Panel

The Grant Review Panel is comprised of individuals located in the greater Bay Area with diverse backgrounds in the cultural sector. Individuals apply to be included in the panelist pool through an open call. The Civic Arts Commission approves the pool of individuals that can be selected to serve as a panelist.

Any Panelist who has a conflict of interest with an application(s) must recuse themselves from reviewing that application(s). **A ‘conflict of interest’ is defined as a situation in which a Panelist has a competing professional, financial, or personal interest that could impair their ability to perform their evaluation responsibilities objectively.**

The Grant Review Panel meeting is public and facilitated through a Zoom Webinar. All applicants receive information regarding the panel meeting’s date, time, and order in which applications will be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel meeting.

Applicants are permitted three (3) minutes at the end of the panel’s discussion of their application to clarify any aspects that may have been misunderstood by the panelists. The allotted three minutes may not be used to communicate additional information not included in the application.

Applicants may request their panel comments after they receive official notice of award or decline.

### 4.3 Civic Arts Commission Approval

After the Grant Review Panel meets to review all applications, the Civic Arts Commission’s Grants Subcommittee meets to develop funding recommendations based on scores and availability of funds. The Subcommittee ensures proposed grant awards are aligned with granting policies and guidelines before sending the recommendations to the full Civic Arts Commission.

Funding recommendations by the Grants Subcommittee are sent directly to applicants and are made public at least five (5) days prior to the Civic Arts Commission approval. The Civic Arts Commission reviews the funding recommendations and votes on final approval.

### 4.4 Appeal Process

Applicants who have evidence of misconduct or technical error in the panel review process may appeal the Grant Subcommittee’s proposed funding scenario by completing an appeal form. Appeal forms must be received at least 10 days in advance of the June 25, 2025 Civic Arts Commission meeting. Applicants can email appeal forms to [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov).

Once an appeal form is received, Civic Arts staff reviews the appeal form for evidence of misconduct or technical error. If misconduct or technical error is evident, the appeal is reviewed by the Grants Subcommittee, and forwarded to the Civic Arts Commission for final appeal decision.

Please note: Dissatisfaction with a final score or award amount is not grounds for appeal.

## 5. GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### 5.1 Invoicing

Grantees must complete a Demographics Survey to receive their grant award invoice from Civic Arts. Staff will provide an invoice for 100% of the grant amount following City Council's approval of the Fiscal Year's budget and after July 1.

Please note: Grantees should be aware of the tax implications for awarded funds and maintain documents required for state and federal income taxes.

### 5.2 Final Report

All grantees must submit a completed Final Report form within 30 days after the Grant Activity Period ends. **Final Reports are due by July 30** unless otherwise noted. The Final Report demonstrates how the grant-funded project was developed and implemented. The Final Report also includes quantitative questions and space to make suggestions for improving the program. Grantees who do not submit a Final Report are ineligible from applying for any future Civic Arts grants.

### 5.3 Grant Activity Period Extension Requests

Grantees who experience circumstances that prevent them from completing their project before the end of the Grant Activity Period (June 30) may request a Grant Activity Period Extension. A Grant Activity Period Extension may be requested for up to one (1) year beyond the original end-date. **Extension requests must be received before June 30 and approved by Civic Arts staff.**

### 5.4 Artist Showcase

Individual Artist Project grantees are required to participate in an Artist Showcase to present their final project processes and products as a cohort. The Artist Showcase is an opportunity to see other grantees' work and share their work with the Civic Arts community. The Artist Showcase may be recorded and used for Civic Arts promotional purposes.

### 5.5 Acknowledging City Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge the City's financial support by using the phrase "Supported in part by a Civic Arts Grant from the City of Berkeley" or including the "City of Berkeley" in lists of supporters. Grantees must display the [City's logo](#) in all promotional materials and media.

### 5.6 City Permits and Permissions

Receiving a grant does not imply that Civic Arts or any other City department will produce, exhibit, or promote artwork(s) created with grant funds. It is the responsibility of the grantee to secure a venue and appropriate insurance for public presentations.

The grantee is solely responsible for securing the necessary City permits or approvals for project elements such as publicly installed art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals. Planning for this should be reflected in the application narrative.

Any grant-funded art installed in the public realm or on property owned by the City of Berkeley must be reviewed and approved by the Civic Arts Commission and its Public Art Subcommittee. The review process must be complete before the project is implemented. This review process applies to murals, public sculpture, and similar projects. This review process should be reflected in the project narrative.

## 5.7 Incomplete Projects

Failure to complete the grant-funded project, required public presentation, or participate in the Artist Showcase will result in a forfeiture of grant funds. Grantees with incomplete projects must return their awarded funds to the City of Berkeley.



# FY26 Community Festivals Grant

## City of Berkeley | Civic Arts Grant Guidelines

APPLY HERE

### Important Dates (Subject to change)

|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Applications Open                                     | January 6, 2025                |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>                           | <b>March 5, 2025, 11:59 pm</b> |
| Grant Review Panel Meeting                            | May 2025                       |
| Grants Subcommittee Meeting – Funding Recommendations | June 6, 2025                   |
| Civic Arts Commission Meeting – Grant Awards Approval | June 25, 2025, 6:00 pm         |
| Grant Activity Period                                 | July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026   |
| Final Report Due                                      | July 30, 2026                  |

## 1. OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Purpose – Why these grants are offered.

The Civic Arts program supports a culturally vibrant and diverse arts ecosystem within the City of Berkeley by funding grants to artists, arts organizations, and festivals.

Community Festival grants fund community festivals and special events that:

- celebrate and preserve a rich variety of cultural opportunities for Berkeley’s residents;
- bolster Berkeley’s vitality;
- increase Berkeley’s reputation as a vibrant destination for visitors;
- create meaningful experiences that build community.

Community Festival grants support a range of events throughout the City, from small-scale and first-time events to large-scale and established festivals. Funded events must be open to the entire public and have a free component.

Please note: This grant is for festivals that are one- or multi-day events, but generally events that occur one time per year. This grant is not intended to fund ongoing programming.

### 1.2 Land Acknowledgment

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo-speaking Ohlone people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley’s incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay

communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

### 1.3 Cultural Equity Statement

The City of Berkeley Civic Arts program commits to equity within the arts and culture sector by consistently evaluating its programs and practices. The City recognizes the multiple benefits the arts provide, regardless of race, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Beyond ensuring access to the arts, the City of Berkeley commits to supporting artists and arts organizations that represent diverse cultures, life experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. The City supports the empowerment of perspectives and identities that have been historically and systemically underrepresented.

### 1.4 Festival Definition

A festival is defined as a public event that celebrates a community, neighborhood, historically significant day, or shared cultural interest. These may include arts fairs, celebrations of cultural heritage, and other events that occur over a limited time period.

### 1.5 Eligibility – Who can apply?

Applicants must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicant is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), or 501(c)(6) organization
- Applicant is an organizational entity that is nonprofit in nature (for example, artist collectives and guilds) and using a Fiscal Sponsor to apply. Fiscal Sponsors must be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.
  - See additional requirements regarding the use of Fiscal Sponsors in section **1.12**

#### Fiscal Sponsors

### 1.6 Eligibility – Who can't apply?

- City of Berkeley government departments or units
- For-profit businesses
- Individual artists

### 1.7 Who is encouraged to apply?

Organizations representing systemically marginalized identities, including but not limited to: Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian); Asian; Black, African American; California Native American, Indigenous, Tribal; Disabled; Elders, Seniors; Latinx, Chicanx; LGBTQIA2S+; Low Income; Neuro-Divergent; Pacific Islander; People of Color; Trans and/or Non-Binary People; Immigrants (Documented and/or Undocumented), Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants; Unhoused; Unsheltered; Veterans; or Youth 18 years of age or older are strongly encouraged to apply.

### 1.8 Grant Amount and Investment

All applicants may request up to **\$7,000** for festival-related expenses.

A projected total of \$200,000 is allocated for this grant category. Award amounts and the number of awards be determined by the amount of applications received, request amounts, and final scores.

Final award amounts are contingent upon City Council's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and Civic Arts Grants allocation; amounts are subject to change.

### **1.9 Funding Use – Grant money can be used for these things.**

A project budget is required for this application. Examples of eligible expenses for this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Artist and performer stipends
- Equipment rentals
- Production or technical staff contractors
- Supplies and materials needed for the festival
- Venue and permit fees

### **1.10 Funding Use Restrictions – Grant money can't be used for these things.**

Grant funds may not be used for the items or events in the following list. Applications that include expenses related to the following will be deemed ineligible.

- Activities not available to the general public
- Activities occurring outside the City of Berkeley
- Administrative or other organizational costs unrelated to production of the event
- Capital improvement projects
- Events in schools during school hours
- Events on university campuses that are primarily for enrolled students
- Events where fundraising is the primary purpose
- Events where sporting is the primary purpose (for example, tournaments, marathons, etc.)
- Ongoing programming (for example, regular programs or events that occur throughout the year and would not be considered a festival or special event)
- Political advocacy or lobbying

### **1.11 Festival Requirements**

- Festival must have a free component
- Festival must be open and accessible to the public
- Festival must take place in the City of Berkeley
- Festival must take place within the Grant Activity Period

### **1.12 Fiscal Sponsors**

For the purposes of Civic Arts grants, a Fiscal Sponsor is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization that receives awarded funds on behalf of an organizational entity that does not have Federal Tax-Exempt status. Fiscal sponsorship is unique to each circumstance and may take the form of processing a single check, providing complex accounting services, and/or project oversight. Fiscal Sponsors may have an official business address anywhere in the United States.

Organizational entities applying with a Fiscal Sponsor must be nonprofit in nature and have their own accounting documentation. These organizational entities must also be comprised of more than one staff member or volunteer.

Fiscally sponsored applicants and Fiscal Sponsors should note the following:

- Proof of the Fiscal Sponsor's nonprofit status is due at the time of application
- A Letter of Agreement between the applicant organization and the Fiscal Sponsor outlining the

conditions of the fiscal sponsorship is due at the time of application

- The Letter of Agreement must be valid through the end of the Grant Activity Period
- Grant application questions and materials—including all budget information—apply to the applicant organization, not the Fiscal Sponsor
- The primary point of contact between Civic Arts and the fiscal sponsorship is the applicant organization, not the Fiscal Sponsor
- Fiscal Sponsors are responsible for all fiscal obligations of the applicant's awarded funds

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

### 2.1 Grant Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted electronically before the deadline. The Community Festivals grant application consists of the following components:

- Proof of nonprofit status for applicant or Fiscal Sponsor
- Narrative questions
- Key staff and/or event personnel qualifications
- Board of directors or festival committee biographies
- Event budget form and budget notes
- Work samples and support materials
- If fiscally sponsored: Letter of Agreement between the applicant and Fiscal Sponsor

### 2.2 Grants Management System

All application materials must be submitted electronically using the Office of Economic Development's grants management system, [Submittable](#). Technical assistance creating a Submittable account is available through [Submittable's Customer Support](#).

Please note: Paper or physical applications are not accepted at this time.

### 2.3 Technical Assistance

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### 2.4 Accommodations for Disabilities

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### 3. EVALUATION AND SCORING

#### 3.1 Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by Grant Review Panelists using the following criteria:

##### **Festival Narrative and Community Significance (25%)**

- Festival celebrates Berkeley’s cultural richness, historical significance, or community/neighborhood identity
- Festival goals are clearly defined
- Festival planning and activity timeline demonstrate clarity and feasibility
- Festival activities and programming are clear and directly relate to the defined goals

##### **Festival Management and Production (30%)**

- Key personnel have a history of producing similar festivals or events to the one proposed
- Applicant demonstrates ability to acquire necessary permits and insurance
- Applicant demonstrates financial responsibility through receiving diversified sources of funding relative to the budget-size and expenses
- Effectiveness of marketing and outreach strategies
- Effectiveness of festival’s evaluation strategies

##### **Community Engagement and Impact (25%)**

- Extent to which community members, local businesses, and local nonprofit organizations in the neighborhood are involved in the planning and implementation of the festival
- Community and/or neighborhood benefit is clearly demonstrated
- Extent to which the festival and festival activities are accessible to people with physical disabilities
- Extent to which the festival and festival activities are free

##### **Cultural Equity (20%)**

- Extent to which the festival supports diverse event personnel and performers through paid opportunities
- Extent to which the festival’s content is rooted in historically marginalized communities and geographically underserved areas of the city
- Extent to which the festival engages economically-disadvantaged individuals

#### 3.2 Scoring Scale

Grant Review Panelists use the following scale to assess how well the application meets the review criteria. Numerical values are calculated to the appropriate weight for each criterion.

|          |                       |  |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>5</b> | <b>Exceptional</b>    | meets review criteria to the highest degree                          |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Strong</b>         | strongly meets review criteria                                       |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Good</b>           | adequately meets review criteria; average                            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Fair</b>           | moderately meets some of the review criteria; needs some improvement |
| <b>1</b> | <b>Underdeveloped</b> | minimally meets the review criteria; greatly needs improvement       |
| <b>0</b> | <b>Weak</b>           | does not meet any elements of the review criteria                    |

## 4. REVIEW PROCESS

### 4.1 Eligibility Screening

Civic Arts staff reviews each application submitted before the deadline for eligibility. Eligible applications are evaluated by a Grant Review Panel in accordance with the review criteria.

### 4.2 Grant Review Panel

The Grant Review Panel is comprised of individuals located in the greater Bay Area with diverse backgrounds in the cultural sector. Individuals apply to be included in the panelist pool through an open call. The Civic Arts Commission approves the pool of individuals that can be selected to serve as a panelist.

Any Panelist who has a conflict of interest with an application(s) must recuse themselves from reviewing that application(s). **A ‘conflict of interest’ is defined as a situation in which a Panelist has a competing professional, financial, or personal interest that could impair their ability to perform their evaluation responsibilities objectively.**

The Grant Review Panel meeting is public and facilitated through a Zoom Webinar. All applicants receive information regarding the panel meeting’s date, time, and order in which applications will be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel meeting.

Applicants are permitted three (3) minutes at the end of the panel’s discussion of their application to clarify any aspects that may have been misunderstood by the panelists. The allotted three minutes may not be used to communicate additional information not included in the application.

Applicants may request their panel comments after they receive official notice of award or decline.

### 4.3 Civic Arts Commission Approval

After the Grant Review Panel meets to review all applications, the Civic Arts Commission’s Grants Subcommittee meets to develop funding recommendations based on scores, number of applications, and availability of funds. The Subcommittee ensures proposed grant awards are aligned with granting policies and guidelines before sending the recommendations to the full Civic Arts Commission.

Funding recommendations by the Grants Subcommittee are made public at least five (5) business days prior to the Civic Arts Commission approval. The Civic Arts Commission reviews the funding recommendations and votes on final approval.

### 4.4 Appeal Process

Applicants who have evidence of misconduct or technical error in the panel review process may appeal the Grant Subcommittee’s proposed funding scenario by completing an appeal form. Appeal forms must be received at least 10 days in advance of the June 26, 2025 Civic Arts Commission meeting. Applicants can email appeal forms to [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov).

Once an appeal form is received, Civic Arts staff reviews the appeal form for evidence of misconduct or technical error. If misconduct or technical error is evident, the appeal is reviewed by the Grants Subcommittee, and forwarded to the Civic Arts Commission for final appeal decision.

**Please note:** Dissatisfaction with a final score or award amount is not grounds for appeal.

## 5. GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### 5.1 Invoicing

Grantees must complete a Demographics Survey to receive their grant award invoice from Civic Arts. Staff will provide an invoice for 100% of the grant amount following City Council's approval of the Fiscal Year's budget and after July 1.

### 5.2 Final Report

All grantees must submit a completed Final Report form within 30 days after the Grant Activity Period ends. **Final Reports are due by July 30** unless otherwise noted. The Final Report should demonstrate how the grant-funded project was developed and implemented. The Final Report also includes evaluation questions for self-reflection and for Civic Arts staff to make improvements to the program. Grantees who do not submit a Final Report are ineligible from applying for any future Civic Arts grants.

### 5.3 Grant Activity Period Extension Requests

Grantees who experience circumstances that prevent them from producing their festival before the end of the Grant Activity Period (June 30) may request a Grant Activity Period Extension. A Grant Activity Period Extension may be requested for up to one (1) year beyond the original end-date. **Extension requests must be received before June 30 and approved by Civic Arts staff.**

### 5.4 Business License

Awarded organizations or Fiscal Sponsors must have a current [City of Berkeley Business License](#).

### 5.5 Acknowledging City Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge the City's financial support by using the phrase "Supported in part by a Civic Arts Grant from the City of Berkeley" or including the "City of Berkeley" in lists of supporters. Grantees must display the [City's logo](#) in all promotional materials and media.

### 5.6 City Permits and Permissions

Receiving a grant does not imply that Civic Arts or any other City department will produce, exhibit, or promote artwork(s) created with grant funds. It is the responsibility of the grantee to secure a venue and appropriate insurance for public presentations.

The grantee is solely responsible for securing the necessary City permits or approvals for project elements such as publicly installed art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals. Planning for this should be reflected in the application narrative.

Any grant-funded art installed in the public realm or on property owned by the City of Berkeley must be reviewed and approved by the Civic Arts Commission and its Public Art Subcommittee. The review process must be complete before the project is implemented. This review process applies to murals, public sculpture, and similar projects. This review process should be reflected in the project narrative.

### 5.7 Incomplete Projects

Failure to complete the grant-funded festival will result in a forfeiture of grant funds. Grantees with incomplete projects must return their awarded funds to the City of Berkeley.



APPLY HERE

**Important Dates (Subject to change)**

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Applications Open                                     | January 6, 2025                    |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>                           | <b>February 26, 2025, 11:59 pm</b> |
| Grant Review Panel Meeting                            | May 2025                           |
| Grants Subcommittee Meeting – Funding Recommendations | June 6, 2025                       |
| Civic Arts Commission Meeting – Grant Awards Approval | June 25, 2025, 6:00 pm             |
| Grant Activity Period                                 | July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026       |
| Final Report Due                                      | July 30, 2026                      |

**1. OVERVIEW**

**1.1 Purpose – Why these grants are offered.**

The purpose of the Arts Programs grant is to support arts and cultural programming in the City of Berkeley that falls within one of two categories:

- **Non-arts nonprofit organizations located in the City of Berkeley** wishing to produce arts/cultural programming in the City of Berkeley led by a partnering arts organization or teaching artist
- **Arts nonprofit organizations located in the Greater Bay Area (outside of Berkeley)** that wish to produce arts/cultural programming in the City of Berkeley

This funding opportunity aims to (1) allow cross-sector collaborations and opportunities for non-arts organizations to hire arts and cultural workers or partner with Berkeley-based arts organizations, and (2) allow Berkeley residents to engage in Greater Bay Area programming offered by non-Berkeley arts organizations.

Please note: This grant is funded in part with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and is not guaranteed to be offered in future Civic Arts grant cycles.

**1.2 Land Acknowledgment**

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchiun), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo-speaking Ohlone people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley’s incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay

communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

### 1.3 Cultural Equity Statement

The City of Berkeley Civic Arts program commits to equity within the arts and culture sector by consistently evaluating its programs and practices. The City recognizes the multiple benefits the arts provide, regardless of race, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Beyond ensuring access to the arts, the City of Berkeley commits to supporting artists and arts organizations that represent diverse cultures, life experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. The City supports the empowerment of perspectives and identities that have been historically and systemically underrepresented.

### 1.4 Definitions

**Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit:** A review criterion required for grant awards using National Endowment for the Arts funds. For this grant program, this can mean a mastery of skills and techniques; communication of a unique vision or perspective; professional approaches to process and presentation; the artistic work(s)' contribution to the development of the community members involved, the art form, and the arts generally; or, the artistic services' contribution to developing a vibrant arts and cultural community. Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit is considered within the context of the arts program and any community identities associated with the program.

**Arts Organization:** A nonprofit 501(c)3 organization with a primary purpose of providing arts, creative, or cultural programming/services. The organization's purpose is assessed and verified by staff using the organization's website, mission, core activities, and IRS National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes.

**Greater Bay Area:** The geographic area comprised of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, or Sonoma counties.

**Non-arts Organization:** A nonprofit 501(c)3 with a primary purpose *other* than providing arts, creative, or cultural programming/services. For example: environmental, health, or human service organizations.

### 1.5 Eligibility – Who can apply?

Applicants must meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicant is a nonprofit 501(c)3 *non-arts* organization with its official business address in the City of Berkeley
- Applicant is a nonprofit 501(c)3 arts organization with its official business address in the Greater Bay Area but outside of Berkeley city limits

### 1.6 Eligibility – Who can't apply?

- Applicants seeking or receiving Civic Arts funding in other grant categories
- City of Berkeley government departments or units
- For-profit businesses or sole proprietorships
- Individual artists
- Public or private school districts
- Non-arts nonprofit organizations located outside of the City of Berkeley

- Organizations disbarred, suspended, or have any other exclusions or disqualifications from receiving federal funds

### 1.7 Who is encouraged to apply?

Organizations representing systemically marginalized identities, including but not limited to: Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian); Asian; Black, African American; California Native American, Indigenous, Tribal; Disabled; Elders, Seniors; Latinx, Chicanx; LGBTQIA2S+; Low Income; Neuro-Divergent; Pacific Islander; People of Color; Trans and/or Non-Binary People; Immigrants (Documented and/or Undocumented), Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants; Unhoused; Unsheltered; Veterans; or Youth 18 years of age or older are strongly encouraged to apply.

### 1.8 Grant Amount and Investment

All applicants may request up to **\$5,000** for eligible program-related expenses.

Sixteen (16) awards will be given in this grant category, totaling an \$80,000 investment for arts programming. Half of this total comes from the City of Berkeley and half comes from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Final award amounts are contingent upon City Council's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget and Civic Arts Grants allocation; amounts are subject to change.

### 1.9 Funding Use – You can use the grant money for these things.

A program budget is required for this application. Examples of eligible expenses for this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Administrative costs related to the program
- Artist and performer stipends
- Equipment rentals
- Production or technical staff contractors
- Supplies and materials needed for the program
- Venue and permit fees
- Up to 10% of award for indirect costs

### 1.10 Funding Use Restrictions – You can't use the grant money for these things.

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Activities occurring outside the City of Berkeley
- Administrative or other organizational costs unrelated to the program
- Capital improvement projects
- Festivals
- Fundraising
- Political advocacy or lobbying
- Programs in schools during school hours
- Programs on university campuses that are primarily for enrolled students
- Programs with religious or evangelical purposes

### 1.11 Program Requirements

- Program must have a free component
- Program must take place in the City of Berkeley

- Program must take place within the Grant Activity Period
- Program must follow the National Endowment for the Arts [sub-awardee regulations](#)

### **1.12 Fiscal Sponsors**

The use of Fiscal Sponsors is not permitted for this grant program.

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

### 2.1 Grant Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted electronically before the deadline. The Arts Programs grant application consists of the following components:

- Proof of nonprofit status for applicant
- Narrative questions
- Key program staff, teaching artist(s), or partnering organization qualifications
- Program budget form and budget notes
- Work samples and support materials

### 2.2 Grants Management System

All application materials must be submitted electronically using the Office of Economic Development's grants management system, [Submittable](#). Technical assistance creating a Submittable account is available through [Submittable's Customer Support](#).

Please note: Paper or physical applications are not accepted at this time.

### 2.3 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for grant program-specific inquiries is available from Civic Arts staff by email, phone or virtual appointment. Technical assistance can provide guidance around eligibility, application requirements, or review criteria.

Application resources available on the [Civic Arts website](#) are a FAQs (frequently asked questions) page and a recording of the Grant Program Webinar.

Staff contact: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead

[hamnah@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:hamnah@berkeleyca.gov)

510-981-7539

[Schedule a virtual appointment](#)

### 2.4 Accommodations for Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations to apply should make their requests to the Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). Staff works with the Disability Compliance Program ([ada@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:ada@berkeleyca.gov)) to review and fulfill the request. **Disability-related accommodation requests must be made at least 72 hours in advance of deadlines or meetings.** TTY users can dial 7-1-1 to be connected to a specially trained communications assistant from a [state relay provider](#).

### 2.5 Translation Services

Translation services for the grant guidelines are available upon request. Requests can be emailed to Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). If the application is submitted in a language other than English, a third-party translation service will be used to translate application answers into English for Grant Review Panelists.

### 3. EVALUATION AND SCORING

#### 3.1 Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by Grant Review Panelists using the following criteria:

##### **Program Narrative and Timeline (25%)**

- Clearly defined goals and/or proposed outcomes and an appropriate plan to determine if those goals and/or outcomes are met
- Ability to carry out the program based on such factors as the appropriateness of the budget, clarity of the project activities, resources involved, and the qualifications of the program's personnel and/or partnerships

##### **Artistic Excellence and Artistic Merit (25%)**

- Quality of the artists and other key individuals, creative process, works of art, organizations, arts education providers, artistic partners, and/or services involved in the program and their relevance to the audience/communities the project aims to serve
- Value and appropriateness of the program to the organization's mission, artistic field, artists, audience, community, and/or constituency

##### **Community Engagement and Impact (25%)**

- Extent to which community members, local businesses, and local nonprofit organizations in the neighborhood are involved in the planning and implementation of the program
- Community and/or neighborhood benefit is clearly demonstrated
- Extent to which the program activities are free
- Extent to which the program activities are accessible to people with physical disabilities

##### **Cultural Equity (25%)**

- Extent to which the program supports diverse personnel, teaching artists, and/or cultural workers through paid opportunities
- Extent to which the program's content is rooted in institutionally underserved communities and geographically underserved areas of the city
- Extent to which the program engages economically-disadvantaged individuals

#### 3.2 Scoring Scale

Grant Review Panelists use the following scale to assess how well the application meets the review criteria. Numerical values are calculated to the appropriate weight for each criterion.

|          |                       |  |
|----------|-----------------------|--|
| <b>5</b> | <b>Exceptional</b>    | meets review criteria to the highest degree                          |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Strong</b>         | strongly meets review criteria                                       |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Good</b>           | adequately meets review criteria; average                            |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Fair</b>           | moderately meets some of the review criteria; needs some improvement |
| <b>1</b> | <b>Underdeveloped</b> | minimally meets the review criteria; greatly needs improvement       |
| <b>0</b> | <b>Weak</b>           | does not meet any elements of the review criteria                    |

## 4. REVIEW PROCESS

### 4.1 Eligibility Screening

Civic Arts staff reviews each application submitted before the deadline for eligibility. Eligible applications are evaluated by a Grant Review Panel in accordance with the review criteria.

### 4.2 Grant Review Panel

The Grant Review Panel is comprised of individuals located in the greater Bay Area with diverse backgrounds in the cultural sector. Individuals apply to be included in the panelist pool through an open call. The Civic Arts Commission approves the pool of individuals that can be selected to serve as a panelist.

Any Panelist who has a conflict of interest with an application(s) must recuse themselves from reviewing that application(s). **A ‘conflict of interest’ is defined as a situation in which a Panelist has a competing professional, financial, or personal interest that could impair their ability to perform their evaluation responsibilities objectively.**

The Grant Review Panel meeting is public and facilitated through a Zoom Webinar. All applicants receive information regarding the panel meeting’s date, time, and order in which applications will be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel meeting.

Applicants are permitted three (3) minutes at the end of the panel’s discussion of their application to clarify any aspects that may have been misunderstood by the panelists. The allotted three minutes may not be used to communicate additional information not included in the application.

Applicants may request their panel comments after they receive official notice of award or decline.

### 4.3 Civic Arts Commission Approval

After the Grant Review Panel meets to review all applications, the Civic Arts Commission’s Grants Subcommittee meets to develop funding recommendations based on scores, number of applications, and availability of funds. The Subcommittee ensures proposed grant awards are aligned with granting policies and guidelines before sending the recommendations to the full Civic Arts Commission.

Funding recommendations by the Grants Subcommittee are made public at least five (5) business days prior to the Civic Arts Commission approval. The Civic Arts Commission reviews the funding recommendations and votes on final approval.

### 4.4 Appeal Process

Applicants who have evidence of misconduct or technical error in the panel review process may appeal the Grant Subcommittee’s proposed funding scenario by completing an appeal form. Appeal forms must be received at least 10 days in advance of the June 26, 2024 Civic Arts Commission meeting. Applicants can email appeal forms to [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov).

Once an appeal form is received, Civic Arts staff reviews the appeal form for evidence of misconduct or technical error. If misconduct or technical error is evident, the appeal is reviewed by the Grants Subcommittee, and forwarded to the Civic Arts Commission for final appeal decision.

**Please note:** Dissatisfaction with a final score or award amount is not grounds for appeal.

## 5. GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### 5.1 Federal Requirement for Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

All grantees must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Grantees can request a UEI in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). Grantees are NOT required to have a full registration in SAM.gov. A UEI must be provided to Civic Arts before payment can be issued.

### 5.2 Invoicing

Grantees must complete a Demographic Survey to receive their grant award invoice from Civic Arts. Staff will provide an invoice for 100% of the grant amount following City Council's approval of the Fiscal Year's budget and after July 1.

### 5.3 Final Report

All grantees must submit a completed Final Report form within 30 days after the Grant Activity Period ends. **Final Reports are due by July 30** unless otherwise noted. The Final Report should demonstrate how the grant-funded project was developed and implemented. The Final Report also includes evaluation questions for self-reflection and for Civic Arts staff to make improvements to the program. Grantees who do not submit a Final Report are ineligible from applying for any future Civic Arts grants.

### 5.4 Grant Activity Period Extension Requests

Grantees who experience circumstances that prevent them from completing their program before the end of the Grant Activity Period (June 30) may request a Grant Activity Period Extension. A Grant Activity Period Extension may be requested for up to six (6) months beyond the original end-date. **Extension requests must be received before June 30 and approved by Civic Arts staff.**

### 5.5 Business License

Awarded organizations must have a current [City of Berkeley Business License](#).

### 5.6 Acknowledging City Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge the City's financial support by using the phrase "Supported in part by a Civic Arts Grant from the City of Berkeley" or including the "City of Berkeley" in lists of supporters. Grantees must display the [City's logo](#) in all promotional materials and media.

### 5.7 Acknowledging National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Support

For print and online program materials, the basic requirement is a phrase acknowledging support from the National Endowment for the Arts using the following language: "This program is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts."

- We encourage you to include "To find out more about how National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)."
- In addition, we encourage you to use the [National Endowment for the Arts current logo](#) whenever possible to accurately indicate that your program has been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.
- You may also use social media to indicate National Endowment for the Arts support of your program, such as "This program is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts." It is also acceptable to include the agency in a list among other program supporters. (On Twitter and Instagram, you may use @NEAarts instead of spelling out the full name of the agency.)

## **5.8 City Permits and Permissions**

Receiving a grant does not imply that Civic Arts or any other City department will produce, exhibit, or promote artwork(s) created with grant funds. It is the responsibility of the grantee to secure a venue and appropriate insurance for public presentations.

The grantee is solely responsible for securing the necessary City permits or approvals for project elements such as publicly installed art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals. Planning for this should be reflected in the application narrative.

Any grant-funded art installed in the public realm or on property owned by the City of Berkeley must be reviewed and approved by the Civic Arts Commission and its Public Art Subcommittee. The review process must be complete before the project is implemented. This review process applies to murals, public sculpture, and similar projects. This review process should be reflected in the project narrative.

## **5.9 Incomplete Programs**

Failure to complete the grant-funded program will result in a forfeiture of grant funds. Grantees with incomplete programs must return their award funds to the City of Berkeley.

# FY26/27 General Operating Support Grant

## City of Berkeley | Civic Arts Grant Guidelines

APPLY HERE

### Important Dates (Subject to change)

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Applications Open                                     | January 6, 2025                 |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>                           | <b>March 12, 2025, 11:59 pm</b> |
| Grant Review Panel Meeting                            | May 2025                        |
| Grants Subcommittee Meeting – Funding Recommendations | June 6, 2025                    |
| Civic Arts Commission Meeting – Grant Awards Approval | June 25, 2025, 6:00 pm          |
| Grant Activity Period                                 | July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027    |
| Progress Report Due                                   | July 30, 2026                   |
| Final Report Due                                      | July 30, 2027                   |

## 1. OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Purpose – Why these grants are offered.

The Civic Arts program supports a culturally vibrant and diverse arts ecosystem within the City of Berkeley by funding grants to artists, arts organizations, and festivals.

General Operating Support grants support the growth and stability of Berkeley’s arts community through funding the operational expenses of nonprofit arts organizations. This funding is intended to empower and promote equitable representation of organizations that have been historically and systemically marginalized.

This grant program operates and is open on a two (2) year cycle. If awarded, grantees receive their award amount for Fiscal Year 2026, and will receive the same award amount for Fiscal Year 2027. A two-year cycle is used to reduce the amount of administrative time and effort required to apply for City funding.

### 1.2 Land Acknowledgment

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of xučyun (Huchün), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochoyeno-speaking Ohlone people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley’s residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley’s incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay

communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan Tribe and to create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this land acknowledgement.

### 1.3 Cultural Equity Statement

The City of Berkeley Civic Arts program commits to equity within the arts and culture sector by consistently evaluating its programs and practices. The City recognizes the multiple benefits the arts provide, regardless of race, color, religion, age, disability, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.

Beyond ensuring access to the arts, the City of Berkeley commits to supporting artists and arts organizations that represent diverse cultures, life experiences, and socio-economic backgrounds. The City supports the empowerment of perspectives and identities that have been historically and systemically underrepresented.

### 1.4 Arts Organization Definition

An arts organization is defined as an entity with a primary purpose of providing arts, creative, or cultural programming/services. The organization's purpose is assessed and verified by staff using the organization's website, mission, core activities, and IRS National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes.

### 1.5 Eligibility – Who can apply?

Applicants must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicant's official business address is located in the City of Berkeley
- Applicant is an arts organization as defined by grant guidelines

Applicants must also meet one of the following eligibility requirements:

- Applicant is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization
- Applicant is an organizational entity that is nonprofit in nature (for example, artist collectives and guilds) and using a Fiscal Sponsor to apply. Fiscal Sponsors must be a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.
  - See additional requirements regarding the use of Fiscal Sponsors in section **1.12**

#### Fiscal Sponsors

### 1.6 Eligibility – Who can't apply?

- City of Berkeley government departments or units
- For-profit businesses or sole proprietorships
- Individual artists
- Nonprofit organizations that are not arts/cultural organizations (for example, social service nonprofits, religious institutions, etc.)
- Public or private school districts

### 1.7 Who is encouraged to apply?

Organizations representing systemically marginalized identities, including but not limited to: Arab, MENASA (Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian); Asian; Black, African American; California Native American, Indigenous, Tribal; Disabled; Elders, Seniors; Latinx, Chicanx; LGBTQIA2S+; Low Income; Neuro-Divergent; Pacific Islander; People of Color; Trans and/or Non-Binary People; Immigrants (Documented and/or Undocumented), Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants; Unhoused; Unsheltered; Veterans; or Youth 18 years of age or older are strongly encouraged to apply.

## 1.8 Grant Amount and Investment

All applicants may request up to **\$10,000** for operating-related expenses for each year of the Grant Activity Period.

Awarded organizations will receive two payments, one in Fiscal Year 2026 and one in Fiscal Year 2027. Awards will be the same amount for each of the two fiscal years in the Grant Activity Period.

A projected total of \$450,000 is allocated for this grant category in FY26 and \$450,000 in FY27. Award amounts and the number of awards will be determined by the amount of applications received, request amounts, and final scores.

Final award amounts are contingent upon City Council's adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 budget, Fiscal Year 2027 budget, and Civic Arts Grants allocations for each of those years; amounts are subject to change.

## 1.9 Funding Use – Grant money can be used for these things.

Although a two-year organizational budget form is required, a project budget outlining how the grant funds would be used is not required for this application. Examples of eligible expenses for this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Artist and contractor stipends
- Equipment rentals
- Professional development and training
- Program supplies and materials
- Staff salaries
- Rent and utilities
- Venue and permit fees

## 1.10 Funding Use Restrictions – Grant money can't be used for these things.

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Activities in schools during in-school hours
- Activities that are primarily for university- or college-enrolled students
- Capital improvement projects
- Deficit or debt reduction
- Equipment purchases
- Expenses incurred outside of the Grant Activity Period
- Fundraising
- Political advocacy or lobbying
- Projects with religious or evangelical purposes
- Start-up costs for new organizations or businesses
- Trusts, endowments, or cash reserves

## 1.11 Funding Requirements

Funds must be used for operating and programming expenses within the Grant Activity Period.

## 1.12 Fiscal Sponsors

For the purposes of Civic Arts grants, a Fiscal Sponsor is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization

that receives awarded funds on behalf of an organizational entity that does not have Federal Tax-Exempt status. Fiscal sponsorship is unique to each circumstance and may take the form of processing a single check, providing complex accounting services, and/or project oversight. Fiscal Sponsors may have an official business address anywhere in the United States.

Organizational entities applying with a Fiscal Sponsor must be nonprofit in nature and have their own accounting documentation. These organizational entities must also be comprised of more than one staff member or volunteer.

**NEW:** Applicants using a Fiscal Sponsor must be registered with the [California Secretary of State](#) as a Nonprofit Corporation.

Fiscally sponsored applicants and Fiscal Sponsors should note the following:

- Proof of the Fiscal Sponsor’s nonprofit status is due at the time of application
- Proof of the applicant organization’s nonprofit registration with the Secretary of State is due at the time of application
- A Letter of Agreement between the applicant organization and the Fiscal Sponsor outlining the conditions of the fiscal sponsorship is due at the time of application
  - The Letter of Agreement must be valid through the end of the Grant Activity Period
- Grant application questions and materials—including all budget information—apply to the applicant organization, not the Fiscal Sponsor
- The primary point of contact between Civic Arts and the fiscal sponsorship is the applicant organization, not the Fiscal Sponsor
- Fiscal Sponsors are responsible for all fiscal obligations of the applicant’s awarded funds

## 2. APPLICATION PROCESS

### 2.1 Grant Application Materials

All application materials must be submitted electronically before the deadline. The General Operating Support grant application consists of the following components:

- Proof of Berkeley business address
- Proof of nonprofit status for applicant or Fiscal Sponsor
- Narrative questions
- Work samples and support materials
- Board of directors' biographies, including city of residence
- Key personnel biographies/qualifications
- Budget form and budget notes
- If fiscally sponsored: Letter of Agreement between the applicant and Fiscal Sponsor
- If fiscally sponsored: Proof of registration as a nonprofit with the California Secretary of State

### 2.2 Grants Management System

All application materials must be submitted electronically using the Office of Economic Development's grants management system, [Submittable](#). Technical assistance creating a Submittable account is available through [Submittable's Customer Support](#).

Please note: Paper or physical applications are not accepted at this time.

### 2.3 Technical Assistance

Technical assistance for grant program-specific inquiries is available from Civic Arts staff by email, phone or virtual appointment. Technical assistance can provide guidance around eligibility, application requirements, or review criteria.

Application resources available on the [Civic Arts website](#) are a FAQs (frequently asked questions) page and a recording of the Grant Program Webinar.

Staff contact: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead  
[hamnah@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:hamnah@berkeleyca.gov)  
510-981-7539  
[Schedule a virtual appointment](#)

### 2.4 Accommodations for Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations to apply should make their requests to the Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). Staff works with the Disability Compliance Program ([ada@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:ada@berkeleyca.gov)) to review and fulfill the request. **Disability-related accommodation requests must be made at least 72 hours in advance of deadlines or meetings.** TTY users can dial 7-1-1 to be connected to a specially trained communications assistant from a [state relay provider](#).

### 2.5 Translation Services

Translation services for the grant guidelines are available upon request. Requests can be emailed to Civic Arts staff at [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov). If the application is submitted in a language other than English, a third-party translation service will be used to translate application answers into English for Grant Review Panelists.

### 3. EVALUATION AND SCORING

#### 3.1 Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by Grant Review Panelists using the following criteria:

##### Arts and Cultural Programming (25%)

- Organization provides high-quality programming and services that contribute to Berkeley’s cultural ecosystem
- Organization articulates clear goals for the next two years related to its mission
- Effectiveness of organizational and programmatic evaluation strategies

##### Organizational Leadership (25%)

- Key personnel demonstrate the ability to reach programmatic and operational goals through qualifications and/or past experience
- Board of directors demonstrate relevant skills/experience in governing organization
- Applicant demonstrates financial health through diversified funding sources and a balanced budget (relative to budget size)

##### Community Engagement and Impact (25%)

- Effectiveness of organizational outreach and engagement strategies appropriate to identified audience(s)
- Extent to which input and feedback is collected from community members and/or organizational partners about programming and services
- Extent to which programming and services are accessible to people with physical disabilities
- Community benefit to Berkeley residents is clearly articulated through Berkeley-based programming and services

##### Cultural Equity (25%)

- Extent to which the organization employs diverse personnel and is governed by a diverse board of directors
- Extent to which the organization’s programming and services are rooted in institutionally underserved communities and geographically underserved areas of the city
- Extent to which the organization meaningfully engages economically-disadvantaged individuals
- Applicant shows organizational growth through changes made directly related to cultural equity in the past two years

#### 3.2 Scoring Scale

Grant Review Panelists use the following scale to assess how well the application meets the review criteria. Numerical values are calculated to the appropriate weight for each criterion.

|   |                       |  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| 5 | <b>Exceptional</b>    | meets review criteria to the highest degree                          |
| 4 | <b>Strong</b>         | strongly meets review criteria                                       |
| 3 | <b>Good</b>           | adequately meets review criteria; average                            |
| 2 | <b>Fair</b>           | moderately meets some of the review criteria; needs some improvement |
| 1 | <b>Underdeveloped</b> | minimally meets the review criteria; greatly needs improvement       |
| 0 | <b>Weak</b>           | does not meet any elements of the review criteria                    |

## 4. REVIEW PROCESS

### 4.1 Eligibility Screening

Civic Arts staff reviews each application submitted before the deadline for eligibility. Eligible applications are evaluated by a Grant Review Panel in accordance with the review criteria.

### 4.2 Grant Review Panel

The Grant Review Panel is comprised of individuals located in the greater Bay Area with diverse backgrounds in the cultural sector. Individuals apply to be included in the panelist pool through an open call. The Civic Arts Commission approves the pool of individuals that can be selected to serve as a panelist.

Any Panelist who has a conflict of interest with an application(s) must recuse themselves from reviewing that application(s). **A ‘conflict of interest’ is defined as a situation in which a Panelist has a competing professional, financial, or personal interest that could impair their ability to perform their evaluation responsibilities objectively.**

The Grant Review Panel meeting is public and facilitated through a Zoom Webinar. All applicants receive information regarding the panel meeting’s date, time, and order in which applications will be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to attend the panel meeting.

Applicants are permitted three (3) minutes at the end of the panel’s discussion of their application to clarify any aspects that may have been misunderstood by the panelists. The allotted three minutes may not be used to communicate additional information not included in the application.

Applicants may request their panel comments after they receive official notice of award or decline.

### 4.3 Civic Arts Commission Approval

After the Grant Review Panel meets to review all applications, the Civic Arts Commission’s Grants Subcommittee meets to develop funding recommendations based on scores, number of applications, and availability of funds. The Subcommittee ensures proposed grant awards are aligned with granting policies and guidelines before sending the recommendations to the full Civic Arts Commission.

Funding recommendations by the Grants Subcommittee are made public at least five (5) business days prior to the Civic Arts Commission approval. The Civic Arts Commission reviews the funding recommendations and votes on final approval.

### 4.4 Appeal Process

Applicants who have evidence of misconduct or technical error in the panel review process may appeal the Grant Subcommittee’s proposed funding scenario by completing an appeal form. Appeal forms must be received at least 10 days in advance of the June 26, 2025 Civic Arts Commission meeting. Applicants can email appeal forms to [civicarts@berkeleyca.gov](mailto:civicarts@berkeleyca.gov).

Once an appeal form is received, Civic Arts staff reviews the appeal form for evidence of misconduct or technical error. If misconduct or technical error is evident, the appeal is reviewed by the Grants Subcommittee, and forwarded to the Civic Arts Commission for final appeal decision.

**Please note:** Dissatisfaction with a final score or award amount is not grounds for appeal.

## 5. GRANTEE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

### 5.1 Invoicing

Grantees must complete a Demographics Survey to receive their grant award invoice from Civic Arts. Staff will provide an invoice for 100% of the grant amount following City Council's approval of the Fiscal Year's budget and after July 1.

### 5.1 Progress Report and Final Report

All grantees must submit a completed Progress Report form within 30 days after the midpoint of the two-year Grant Activity Period. Progress Reports are usually due by July 30 unless otherwise noted.

Grantees must also submit a completed Final Report form within 30 days after the end of the Grant Activity Period. Final Reports are usually due by July 30 unless otherwise noted.

The Reports should demonstrate progress toward goals and how the grant funds were used. The Final Report also includes evaluation questions for reflection and for Civic Arts staff to make improvements to the program. Grantees who do not submit a Progress Report or Final Report are ineligible from applying for any future Civic Arts grants.

### 5.2 Grant Activity Period Extension Requests

Grantees who experience circumstances that prevent them from spending grant funds before the end of the Grant Activity Period (June 30) may request a Grant Activity Period Extension. A Grant Activity Period Extension may be requested for up to one (1) year beyond the original end-date. **Extension requests must be received before June 30 and approved by Civic Arts staff.**

### 5.3 Business License

Awarded organizations must have a current [City of Berkeley Business License](#).

### 5.4 Acknowledging City Support

Grant recipients must acknowledge the City's financial support by using the phrase "Supported in part by a Civic Arts Grant from the City of Berkeley" or including the "City of Berkeley" in lists of supporters. Grantees must display the [City's logo](#) in all promotional materials and media.

### 5.5 City Permits and Permissions

Receiving a grant does not imply that Civic Arts or any other City department will produce, exhibit, or promote artwork(s) created with grant funds. It is the responsibility of the grantee to secure a venue and appropriate insurance for public presentations.

The grantee is solely responsible for securing the necessary City permits or approvals for project elements such as publicly installed art, street closures, sound amplification in public space, or murals. Planning for this should be reflected in the application narrative.

Any grant-funded art installed in the public realm or on property owned by the City of Berkeley must be reviewed and approved by the Civic Arts Commission and its Public Art Subcommittee. The review process must be complete before the project is implemented. This review process applies to murals, public sculpture, and similar projects. This review process should be reflected in the project narrative.

## 5.6 Unused Grant Funds

Failure to use grant funds for operational purposes within the Grant Activity Period will result in a forfeiture of the award. Grantees must return unused funds to the City of Berkeley.