



AGENDA REPORT

TO: Edward D. Reiskin
City Administrator

FROM: Alexa Jeffress
Director, Economic and
Workforce Development
Department

SUBJECT: FY 2020-21 Cultural Funding
Grants-Round Two

DATE: February 16, 2021

City Administrator Approval 

Date: February 26, 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Awarding Cultural Services Grants To Thirty-Seven (37) Oakland-Based Nonprofit Organizations And Individual Artists For Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (Round Two), In A Total Amount Not To Exceed \$480,000.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Adoption of the proposed resolution will authorize the City Administrator to enter into Cultural Services Grant Agreements with thirty-seven (37) Oakland-based artists and nonprofit organizations who provide cultural services that reach all seven of Oakland's Council Districts. These organizations support artistic excellence and cultural diversity through the provision of services in dance, music, theater, media, digital, visual, literary, and community arts, while leveraging other government, corporate, and private spending on the arts in Oakland. The grant funds will support over 772 individual arts events and activities, most of them offered free or low-cost to the public, and will expose over 110,047 participants (71 percent Oakland-based) to cultural arts services and programming.

The Funding Advisory Committee (FAC) met on December 3, 2020 via Zoom conference to review this recommendation for the Neighborhood Voices grant category. The FAC approved a motion to approve funding allocations and the grantee pool for this category as Round Two for the fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 Cultural Funding. The list of award recommendations and grant descriptions are included as **Attachment A**.

FAC voted unanimously to approve this Round Two FY 2020-21 allocation to recommend that the City Council award the proposed grants, totaling \$480,000 including \$249,639.20 from the General Fund, \$144,292.80 from the Transient Occupancy Tax Fund in FY 2020-21, and \$86,068 from the Central City East Public Art carried forward from FY 2019-20.

City Council
March 16, 2021

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Program Overview

The Cultural Funding Program (CFP) is an annual program established by City Council in 1985 as the City's mechanism to support Oakland-based nonprofit arts and cultural organizations through a competitive application process. These grants infuse Oakland's neighborhoods with arts and cultural activities that increase exposure to, understanding of, and respect for diverse cultural heritages; support arts activities that engage the community; and support hands-on arts instruction in Oakland's public schools. For FY 2020-21 CFP will provide funding in two rounds, in the following categories:

Round One was approved by Council Resolution 88330 C.M.S. at the October 6, 2020 Council Meeting and included the Organization Assistance, second-year grant awards.

Round Two, the subject of the report will be heard at a March 2021 Council Meeting, and includes:

- Neighborhood Voices for Organizations, and
- Neighborhood Voices for Individual Artists.

An overview of the CFP grant categories is included as ***Attachment B***.

Policies, review of procedures, and a panel system of evaluating applications were established to ensure transparency and public trust in the distribution of public funds for the arts in Oakland. Oakland's CFP is one of the only local grant-making agencies that allows applicants to address the panel during a three-minute period. The applicant's three-minute address is used to clarify any questions or misinterpretations that the applicant may have heard during the panel discussion. The program is managed by Cultural Affairs staff within the Department of Economic & Workforce Development. The FAC reviews scores established by the panels, makes allocation recommendations based on panel ranking, and hears applicant appeals, if any. The FAC is a volunteer body providing input in matters relating to CFP policies and procedures. The seven voting members are recruited from the arts community and are elected by current FAC members.

With City Council support, CFP grants have historically been funded from the General Purpose Fund (GPF). In FY 2009-10, voters passed Measure C, adding a Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) surcharge that supplements CFP funding, with a commensurate budgeted reduction in GPF support for the grants program.

Changes to FY 2020-21 Cultural Funding Grant Program

Historically, the CFP awarded grants in four (4) grant categories; Individual Artists, Organization Projects, Art-in-the-Schools, and Organizational Assistance. In FY 2019-20, the CFP awarded a total of 91 grants to individual artists and organizations. For the current fiscal year, the program will award a total of 63 grants in two rounds of funding, with larger grant amounts overall. The larger grants amounts will increase the impact for individual grantees, and the reduced number of grants will accommodate limitations in staffing capacity. Since FY 2010-11 the staffing has been reduced by 50 percent, despite the increasing number of applicants and grantees. With

the City's complex grant processing requirements, this has caused long delays in grantee check disbursement.

To resolve this issue, FAC voted to suspend the Art-in-the-Schools category for FY 2020-21. However, artists and organizations offering school residencies were eligible to apply for the Neighborhood Voices grant in Round Two.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Racial Equity Impact Analysis

In the spring of 2017, the Cultural Affairs Division embarked on the process of creating a Cultural Plan for the City of Oakland. The cultural planning process began with a research and discovery phase that included individual interviews and small group meetings with over 70 people, and an extensive field literature and City document review. Meetings were targeted to the cultural community and public. An online survey was offered as an additional vehicle for community input. Approximately 300 community members attended the in-person meetings and about 450 surveys were received. In 2018, the Cultural Plan "Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan" was released to foreground equity and included an action plan and recommendations. The City is currently in Phase One of the action plan: *Perform a cultural and racial equity impact analysis of current programs, policies, and procedures and explore asset-based approaches.*¹

The Division was successful in securing resources from the Surdna Foundation to conduct the cultural and racial equity impact analysis. This led to the hiring of LeaderSpring, who began the work in January 2020. LeaderSpring's work is anchored in the idea that racial diversity, equity, and inclusion through belonging are 21st century leadership competencies. Through their consulting services LeaderSpring advances the work of foundations, corporations, public agencies, and nonprofit organizations by strengthening leadership competencies, building organizational capacity, and creating communities of leaders driven to impact change.² LeaderSpring is currently gathering data through interviews with Cultural Affairs Division staff, CFP grantees and grant review panelists, Oakland Funding Advisory Committee members, Cultural Affairs Commissioners and Oakland community arts leaders. They will collect and analyze the data from their interviews, and review division documents. They will present their report to Cultural Affairs Commission and the Life Enrichment Committee with recommendations in April 2021.

Grant Review Panel Process

During the FY 2020-21 Round Two application period, the CFP received a total of 179 applications from Oakland-based artists and nonprofit organizations for the Neighborhood Voices category. Staff reviewed the applications and passed along those that closely met the guidelines to the grant review panelists. In November 2020, CFP review panels evaluated proposals from 40 organizations and 66 applications from individual artists. A total of ten (10)

¹ Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan. March 2018.

² LeaderSpring website www.leaderspring.org/consulting

community/peer panelists reviewed the eligible proposals. Scores and ranking of the applicants were forwarded to the FAC for approval. The FAC met on December 3, 2020 via Zoom conference to review these recommendations. The FAC determined grant awards based on applicant ranking by score and funds available and voted unanimously to recommend the City Council approve funding to 17 organizations and 20 individual artist applicants.

Panelists thoroughly discussed, evaluated and scored each proposal based on established criteria. In broad terms, the criteria for panel review are: (1) soundness of applicant’s plan for artistic/cultural services and quality of the artistic product; (2) management ability of personnel and the fiscal soundness of the program or project; (3) the applicant’s ability to implement the proposed activities; identify and market services to potential audiences; and (4) the extent to which the applicant’s activities fulfill the goals of the CFP. Upon completion of the review process and ranking of the applications, the FAC was charged with determining a cut-off for grant awards and the allocation of funds. Applicants receiving an average score lower than 70 (from a possible 100 points) were automatically disqualified for funding. These funding allocations consider the applicants’ score, request amount, and budget size.

Approximately 110,047 participants, residents, and visitors will be exposed to the arts through CFP events, activities and projects. This figure includes active participants, on-site audiences, virtual programming, and estimated internet site visitors.

Notes Regarding Review Panel Recommendations and Statistics

Table 1 below shows the total number of Round Two applications received, reviewed and recommended by the evaluation panel for the Organizational Assistance category.

Table 1. Application Statistics

Round Two (FY2020-21) Neighborhood Voices	No. of applications received	Total Awards	Award Rate	Amount Awarded
Individual Artists	126	20	16%	\$ 140,000.00
Organizations	53	17	32%	\$ 340,000.00
			TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED	\$ 480,000.00

FISCAL IMPACT

The one-time cost to support these Cultural Funding Grants for Round Two will be \$480,000 which is included in the FY 2020-21 budget. These funds will be drawn from FY 2020-21 funds and carry forward funds from FY 2019-20. This one-time cost is budgeted as follows: \$249,639.20 from General Purpose Fund (1010) CCAD-Cultural Programs Org (90523), Cultural Arts Grant Fund Project (1000166) \$144,292.80 from the Transient Occupancy Tax surcharge, which will be reserved for arts grants in Measure C: Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Surcharge Fund (2419), Cultural Arts & Marketing Org (85511), Cultural Funding Program TOT Project (1000458) and \$86,068 from the additional funding made available from the expenditure

budget across various Central City East Redevelopment Area Projects (1000092 – 1000097) in Municipal Capital Improvements: Public Arts Fund (5505), Public Arts Organization (85521).

The project cost summary is included in **Table 2** below, and a breakdown of the appropriated project funding sources is included in **Table 3** below.

Table 2: Project Cost Summary

Cost Category	Description	Amount
Grant Disbursements	Grant disbursements to FY2020-21 Round Two, Cultural Funding grantees	\$ 480,000.00
Total Project:		\$ 480,000.00

Table 3: Project Funding Sources

Funding Source	Organization	Account	Project	Program	Amount
General Purpose Fund 1010	90523	53311	1000166	SC02	\$249,639.20
Transient Occupancy Tax 2419	85511	54912	1000458	CE02	\$144,292.80
Municipal Capital Improvements: Public Arts Fund 5505	85521	53311	1000092 – 1000097	CE01	\$ 86,068.00
Total Project:					\$480,000.00

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

The availability and open application period for the FY 2020-21 Round Two, Neighborhood Voices grant was announced September 1, 2020. Application guidelines and grant category descriptions were widely publicized for six weeks. Outreach included posting on the City website, social media sites and publications featuring cultural grant opportunities. Email notices were sent to interested groups including past grant applicants and all parties that contacted CFP staff for arts funding opportunities. Announcements were made at public events. CFP staff conducted public workshops and one-on-one technical assistance meetings for prospective applicants from September 10, 2020 through the application deadline. A total of 38 people attended the public workshops via Zoom, and 21 prospective applicants received one-on-on technical assistance from CFP staff.

An Open Call invited community members to serve on peer review panels. Grant Review Panels convened to discuss and evaluate applications in open meetings, where applicants had the opportunity to attend and address the panel with a three-minute statement via Zoom. Grant Review Panels were open to the public and accessible through a public Zoom link.

COORDINATION

The City Attorney's Office and the Budget Bureau were consulted in the preparation of this report and resolution. The FAC has also been consulted and made the award recommendations herein presented to the City Council.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Community-oriented arts activities bolster the cultural arts identity of Oakland, fortifying the City as a destination, and creating positive publicity resulting in varying levels of economic return. In two rounds of funding for FY 2020-21, CFP grantees will employ over 700 Oakland-based workers and support staff. Their activities generate local sales taxes and revenues for city and local businesses. Many Oakland grantee organizations have received international notoriety and draw large crowds for their performances or artwork.

Environmental: There are no environmental opportunities or benefits resulting from any action outlined in this report.

Race & Equity: The CFP offers an open, competitive process for applicants, resulting in awards to artists and arts organizations that represent all seven Council Districts. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation is available for deaf and hearing impaired applicants, language translation services are provided through the City of Oakland's Equal Access Program, and staff performs outreach in communities with significant Asian, African American, Latinx, and immigrant populations. Social equity is achieved through outreach activities that include How-to-Apply Workshops, one-on-one technical assistance that targets under-represented communities, and the recruitment of grant review panelists that represent Oakland's diverse community. The CFP provides support to artists and organizations that serve low-income, culturally-specific, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender/ Queer (LGBTQ), youth, disabled, and senior communities.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That the City Council Adopt a Resolution Authorizing the City Administrator to Enter into Thirty-Seven (37) Grant Agreements to Thirty-Seven (37) Oakland-based Individual artists and Nonprofit Organizations Providing Arts and Cultural Services in Oakland During Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (Round Two), In A Total Amount Not to Exceed \$480,000.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Roberto Bedoya, Cultural Affairs Manager, at (510) 238-2136.

Respectfully submitted,



ALEXA JEFFRESS
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Department

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Attachments (3)

- A: FY 2020-21 Round Two-Grant Award Recommendations and Project Descriptions
- B: FY 2020-21 Description of Cultural Funding Grant Categories
- C: FY 2020-21 Round Two-Application Statistics