



Agenda Report

Arts Commission

Item #: 26-221

Meeting Date: 4/2/2026

TITLE: APPROVAL OF ARTS GRANT AWARDS FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

DEPARTMENT: PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PRESENTED BY: LAURETTE GARNER, ARTS SPECIALIST

CONTACT INFORMATION: LAURETTE GARNER, ARTS SPECIALIST, (714) 754-5322

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Arts Commission:

1. Review and approve arts grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Arts Grant program (Attachment 1).

BACKGROUND:

The Cultural Arts Committee (CAC) implemented an Arts Grant program in 2017, funded by money generated through ARTventure fees and Utility Box Art Program sponsorships. As of May 25, 2021, the CAC Grant Program had distributed \$11,375 to twenty-three arts related projects organized by artists and arts organizations hosted within the City of Costa Mesa.

For the current fiscal year, 2025-26, arts grant awards are funded through the Arts and Culture Plan Fund. The total allocated amount is twelve thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,500). In addition, the Arts Grant program includes the revised guidelines that were approved by the Arts Commission at the April 3, 2025 meeting (Attachment 2).

ANALYSIS:

In preparation for the current year Arts Grant program, staff prepared an arts grant announcement which was posted using the following methods:

- The Spring Spotlight, the City's recreation magazine that was printed and distributed to 45,500 households
- The Snapshot, the City's weekly newsletter
- The Parks and Community Services and City of Costa Mesa social media accounts
- Spark Orange County- Arts Orange County's event website
- Emails sent to various artists and arts organizations and schools, which included the NMUSD Teacher on Special Assignment (Arts) and the County Arts Coordinator
- Print flyers placed in city facilities

Applications were available on the City's website www.costamesaca.gov/artsculture and were due by March 9, 2026.

Staff reviewed each of the grant applications to ensure they were complete and met all of the criterias in the Arts Grant Guidelines. For the current fiscal year, there were fifteen (15) grant applications received, of which fourteen (14) met the requirements.

Staff created an Arts Grant Review Panel, which consisted of two (2) Arts Commissioners, and one (1) arts administrator. The review panelists were each provided the fourteen (14) Arts Grant Program applications and materials, along with guidelines for scoring and a scoring rubric. Panelists were instructed to complete an online scoring sheet for each application and submit them to the Arts Specialist. The review panel also participated in a Zoom meeting with city staff to review all final scores and funding suggestions. Funding amounts were designated by each panelist and subsequently reviewed and approved by City staff.

Staff have provided a breakdown of the programs and the funding amounts recommended by the Arts Grant Review Panel. Staff recommends that the Commission review the results and approve the grant amounts for the organizations listed, with the amounts that are specified for each organization.

All organizations that applied for grants have been notified of the Arts Commission meeting and applicants are welcome to make public comments during the appropriate portion of the meeting. Any questions related to the review or scoring process can be shared with staff. Once approved, staff will draft an agreement for each awarded applicant and submit the necessary forms to the finance department requesting that checks be processed and mailed to the grant recipients. Staff will be evaluating the applicants to ensure that all grant funds are used for the purpose identified in the application and may attend funded events. Each awarded applicant is required to fill out an Arts Grant Final Report. and may be asked to present about their project/event at an upcoming Arts Commission meeting. Any problems or issues will be reported back to the Commission later. Each organization has 12 months to spend their funds, or they will be required to forfeit them back to the City.

FISCAL REVIEW:

Funding for the Arts Grant program is currently supported with funds from the Arts & Culture Plan Fund as per the Arts & Culture Master Plan. The fund currently has \$12,500 to distribute for the 2025-26 fiscal year.

LEGAL REVIEW:

No legal review is required at this time.

CONCLUSION:

It is the recommendation of staff that the Arts Commission review and approve the grant awards for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Arts Grant program.