

Artwork by  
Abi Mustapha



# SUPPORT GRANTS ORIENTATION

General operating support  
for arts organizations  
August 29, 2023



# Land acknowledgement

The land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, comprised of the descendants of indigenous people taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during Spanish colonization of the Central Coast, is today working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from historical trauma.



# Today we will cover:

1. Arts Council Grants Program Overview
2. Types of grants
3. Changes since last cycle
4. Grants Timeline
5. Support grant guidelines
6. How to apply
7. Q&A

# ARTS COUNCIL GRANTS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

# Mission & Vision

We nurture and invest in artists, culture, and the arts throughout Santa Cruz County.

We envision a Santa Cruz County where all artists have access to the resources they need to thrive; where a full range of creative expression is accessible to everyone; and the arts are recognized for their essential contributions to a healthy, vibrant, and representative community.

Omar Sosa, Seckou Keita & Gustavo Ovalles at Kuumbwa Jazz Center. Photo : r. r. jones



# Our Commitment to Equity

We seek to deliberately and continuously address systemic barriers to opportunity and are committed to promoting equity and inclusion for all Santa Cruz County residents.

Learn More: [artscouncilsc.org/about/equity](https://artscouncilsc.org/about/equity)



# Equity in Action

Recent steps related to our grants program:

- Majority BIPOC board
- Majority BIPOC Grants Committee, Watsonville and Santa Cruz representation
- Create & Develop grants accessible in Spanish
- Increasing diversity of grantees



# Grants Program Objectives

We provide funding for artists and arts organizations in Santa Cruz County to:

- Support the creation and presentation of **artistically excellent** work
- Increase the **success and sustainability** of artists and arts organizations
- Engage **new audiences** in the arts
- Expand **equitable access** to the arts
- Increase **social impact** through the arts



# 3 TYPES OF GRANTS



# Types of Grants

## Support grants:

- General operating support (unrestricted) grants of \$3,000 to \$7,000
- Open to nonprofit or fiscally-sponsored arts organizations only



# Types of Grants

## Create grants:

- Funding for arts and/or cultural projects open to the public in Santa Cruz County, up to \$3,000
- open to individuals and organizations



# Types of Grants

## Develop grants:

- Funding for professional development (activities that improve artistic skills or expand business/professional capacity), up to \$1,500
- open to individuals and arts organizations



# CHANGES SINCE LAST CYCLE



# 5 Changes Since Last Cycle

## 1 of 5: Review Criteria

The review criteria have changed significantly since last year:

- We are using a new scoring rubric.
- The Grants Program Objective criteria has been eliminated.
- Artistic Excellence has been expanded to Artistic Excellence & Relevance with additional items being scored.
- The Equity & Accessibility criteria rubric has been expanded significantly.



# 5 Changes Since Last Cycle

2 of 5: Further consideration for organizations in under-resourced neighborhoods

In addition to the review criteria, further consideration will be given to: organizations whose programming primarily takes place in neighborhoods most disproportionately impacted by inequities as indicated by the California Healthy Places Index (HPI). HPI is determined by mapping 23 key drivers of health outcomes — like education, job opportunities, and clean air and water.

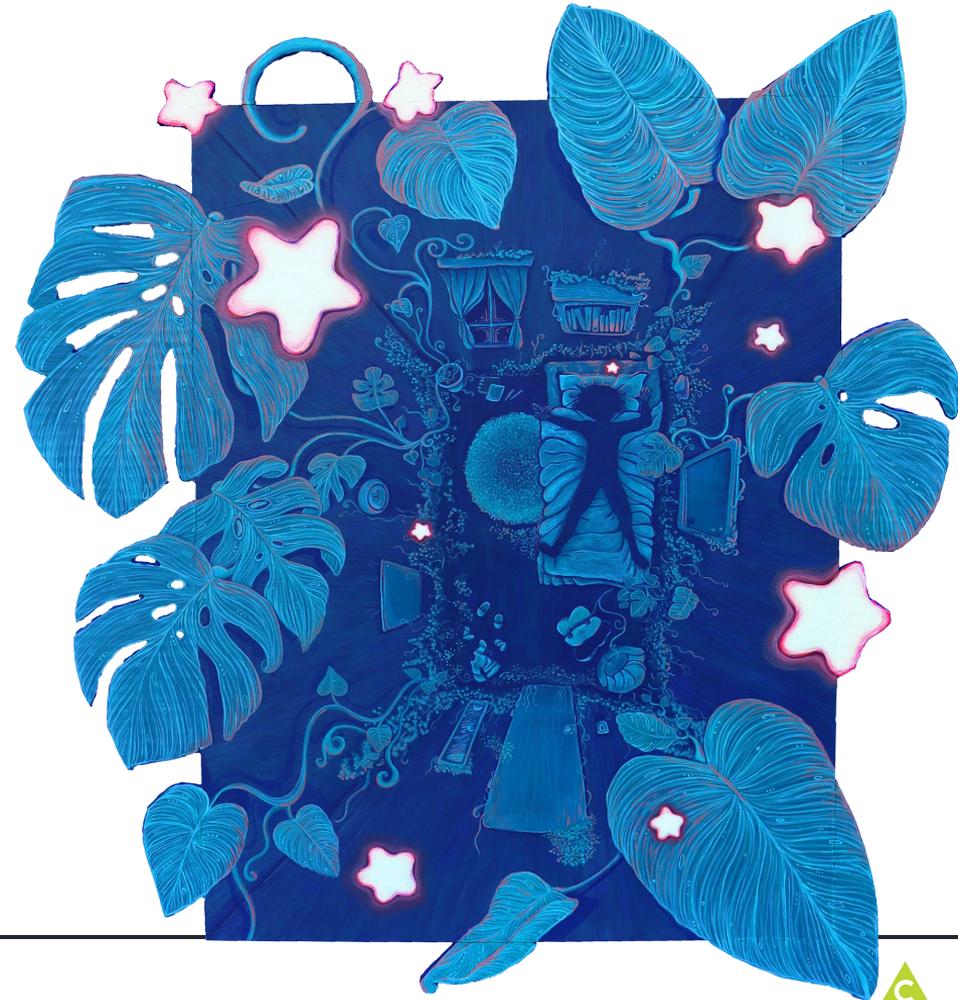
[Click here for more information on HPI.](#)



# 5 Changes Since Last Cycle

3 of 5: Eligibility of universities and colleges

Universities and colleges are ineligible for Arts Council grants, with the exception of providing fiscal sponsorship for one arts program only for a Create or Support grant application (not for Develop grants).



## 5 Changes Since Last Cycle

### Multiple grants

4 of 5: Support and Elevate grantees are no longer eligible to apply for Develop grants, in order to reserve enough of that funding for individual artists and other arts organizations. Support and Elevate grantees also remain ineligible for Create grants.

5 of 5: Applicants may only submit one application for one grant per cycle.



# GRANTS TIMELINE



# When to Apply

## APPLY

## GRANT PERIOD\*

### CYCLE 1:

August 30 – **October 11 at 5pm**  
**Support, Create and Develop grants**

January 2024 – December 2024

### (CYCLE 2:)

*February 14 – March 20 at 5pm*  
*Create and Develop grants only*

*July 2024 – June 2025*

*\*Grant period = when all grant funds must be used*

# Key Dates: Cycle 1

- Sept 6 - Oct 6: office hours in Watsonville, Santa Cruz and on Zoom
- **Oct 11 at 5pm: Application deadline**
- Jan 12, 2024: Decision emails sent
- Jan / Feb: Grant payments sent
- Jan - Dec 2024: Grant Period



# SUPPORT GRANT GUIDELINES



# Eligibility: Who can apply

Applicant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization;
- Have as its primary mission the development and delivery of arts and/or cultural programming to the public;
- Be based in and produce the majority of its work in Santa Cruz County;
- Have a board-approved non-discrimination policy;
- Have completed required reports for previous Arts Council grants;
- Submit only one application for one Arts Council grant per cycle.

# Eligibility (continued)

## Support Grants Do Not Fund:

- Capital improvements, construction, or renovation projects.
- Government departments, boards, or programs.
- Foundations that do not produce arts programming.
- Social services, political or religious advocacy, or for-profit organizations.
- School programs (the Arts Council funds school programs through our Arts Ed program and SPECTRA grants).
- Culinary arts or healing arts organizations.
- **NEW:** Universities and colleges, unless they are providing fiscal sponsorship for one arts program only.



# Awards

- This Support grant cycle will be competitive, with an estimated 66% of applications funded.
- Grants of \$3,000-\$7,000 will be awarded to arts organizations of all budget sizes.
- The top-scoring arts organizations will also be considered for two-year grant awards.



# Review Process

Proposals are reviewed and scored by the Grants Program Manager and members of the Grants Committee, composed of majority BIPOC community volunteers with diverse arts backgrounds. The Grants Committee considers the scores and comments and makes funding recommendations to the Arts Council Board of Directors for approval.



# Review Criteria

- Artistic Excellence & Relevance
- Impact, Strategy & Sustainability
- Equity & Accessibility



## Review Criteria: Artistic Excellence & Relevance (50 of 150 points)

- Is a clear vision of artistic excellence articulated?
- Does the organization's programming align with their vision of artistic excellence?
- Does the applicant demonstrate a strong understanding of the audience and/ or participants they engage? (in terms of geography, age, race/ethnicity, etc.)
- Does the applicant clearly explain how their programming and engagement strategies are relevant and responsive to their community?
- Do support materials (work samples, supporting documents) also support the descriptions of artistic excellence, programming, and community engagement?



## Review Criteria: Impact, Strategy & Sustainability (50 of 150 points)

- Is the organization's ability to fulfill its mission evident throughout the application?
- Are the organization's goals clearly described, with short-term goals for 2024 aligning well with their long-term goals/strategy?
- Does the applicant demonstrate awareness of the organization's strengths?
- Does the applicant identify the organization's biggest risks/challenges, as well as appropriate strategies to address them?
- Do budget and financial documents demonstrate sound financial management?



# Review Criteria: Equity & Accessibility (50 of 150 points)

- Does the applicant communicate a strong understanding of equity?
- Do staff, board, artists and key collaborators include diverse representation from marginalized / underrepresented communities?
- Does the organization provide accessible opportunities for diverse community participation by audience, participants, collaborators, and/or supporters?
- Does the organization demonstrate past (recent) commitment to equity through specific strategies, activities or achievements?
- Are future goals related to equity clearly articulated, with specific strategies in place for the coming year?
- Does the applicant specify which marginalized communities will have improved access to the organization's programming through those strategies? Examples include but are not limited to: people of color, LGBTQIA+, those with disabilities or neurodiversity, low socio-economic classes, residents of different geographic locations, unhoused community members, immigrants, etc.
- Is the organization's commitment to equity and accessibility evident throughout the application, including the support materials?



# Equity & Accessibility Resources

- [CAC Racial Equity Resource Page](#)
- [Americans for the Arts Cultural Equity Resource Center](#)
- [Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Arts and Cultural Organization](#)
- [Accessibility in the Arts: A Promise and a Practice](#)
- [Accessibility: Publications, Checklists, & Resources from the NEA](#)



# HOW TO APPLY



# How to Apply

- All applications must be submitted online in the grants portal.
- Download and review the guidelines carefully (from the Support grants webpage) before beginning your application.
- You can also download the list of application questions as a Microsoft Word doc to use as a reference.

Grants Portal ⇨ [bit.ly/artscouncilsc-grants](https://bit.ly/artscouncilsc-grants)

Grants website ⇨ [artscouncilsc.org/grants](https://artscouncilsc.org/grants)

Home > Opportunities & Resources > Apply for a Grant

# APPLY FOR A GRANT



Apply online

Grants Portal

Feedback

[artscouncilsc.org/grants](https://artscouncilsc.org/grants) → [Support Grants webpage](#)

# Online Grants Portal

Select Language ▼



## Logon

Email Address\*

tamara@artscouncilsc.org

Password\*

.....

Log On

Create New Account

[Forgot your Password?](#)

### *(Información en español a continuación)*

Welcome to Arts Council Santa Cruz County's online grants portal! You must have an account in this online grants portal in order to submit an application for an Arts Council grant.

Visit [artscouncilsc.org/grants](https://artscouncilsc.org/grants) to learn more about grant opportunities and to sign up for our Grants Newsletter (scroll to the bottom of the page to sign up).

### **Before Creating a New Account:**

- **Individuals:** If you think you created an account already, do not create a new account. Please contact our team at [grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org](mailto:grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org). We can double-check for you, and help you update contact information.
- **Organizations/Schools:** If someone else at your organization or school has an account, do not create a new account. Please contact our team at [grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org](mailto:grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org) and we can add you as a new user to the existing organization's account.

**Existing Users:** Log in to start the application process or to complete a final report. If you forgot your password, please use the "Forgot your

# Grant Writing Tips

- Start now!
- Read the guidelines. Go through the review criteria to see how each part of the application will be evaluated.
- Work on your written responses:
  - Respond directly to the application questions.
  - Don't leave out important details.
  - "Show, don't tell"
  - Space is limited; make sure responses are concise - not repetitive.
- Collect supporting materials.
- Ask for feedback.



# Selecting Supporting Materials / Prepare las materiales de acompañamiento

- Are the work samples relevant to your written responses? In particular, do they support the definition of artistic excellence and the community engagement strategies as written in the application?
- Do they reflect a consistent body of work (similarity in style, theme, or visual language) and/or technical proficiency in a single medium?
- Consider including a mix of artistic work samples, project flyers/marketing material or other documentation that best represent the proposal.
- While photo and video work samples do not need to be professionally done, avoid blurry photos, as well as very shaky or fast-moving videos.



# Drop-in Office Hours / Horas de oficina sin cita previa

Office hours are informal times when you can get grant application support from Arts Council staff. You can drop in during any of the scheduled times, and since there isn't a presentation, you don't have to be there at the beginning of the hour or stay til the end. No questions or situations are too simple or too complicated.

## Watsonville office hours:

- **Sat 9/16, 1-2pm** at the Watsonville Center for the Arts, 375 Main Street
- **Wed 10/4, 5-6pm** at the Watsonville Library conference room (2nd floor), 275 Main Street

## Santa Cruz office hours:

- **Wed 9/6, 5-6pm** at the Arts Council conference room, 1070 River Street, SC
- **Sat 9/23, 1-2pm** at the Arts Council conference room, 1070 River Street, SC

## Virtual office hours on Zoom:

- **Fridays 11am-12pm:** Sept. 8, 15, 22 and Oct 6 - no office hours on Sept. 29  
[Click here to join Zoom](#) (ID: 85970844253 Passcode: 201791)



**Tamara Liu**, *Grants Program Manager*  
**Anthony Rocha**, *Grants Program Associate*

**Phone:** 1.831.475.9600x16 **OR**  **Text:** 1.831.226.1174  
[grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org](mailto:grantsprogram@artscouncilsc.org)

# THANK YOU