



City Council

Approval of the 2023 Grants to Arts and Culture Organizations

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Title

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Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

The Arts Commission recommends approval of grants to area arts and culture organizations for 2023.

City Manager Recommendation:

Move to approve grants to area arts and culture organizations for 2023, as recommended by the Arts Commission.

Report

Issue:

Whether to approve grants to arts and culture organizations for 2023.

Staff Contact:

Stephanie Johnson, Arts Program Manager, Parks, Arts & Recreation, 360.709.2678.

Presenter(s):

Stephanie Johnson, Parks, Arts & Recreation
Jim Burlingame, Chair, Arts Commission

Background and Analysis:

The intent of the Grants to Arts and Culture Organizations (GACO) program is to provide equitable access to the arts for all Olympians. The program goal is to fund projects that expand citizen involvement; engage underserved populations; and promote the interests of the broader Olympia community.

The total available funding for this grant period is \$20,000. In this fifth year of the program, eleven applications were received, with a total funding request of \$47,880.

Commissioners reviewed the applications in advance of the meeting and discussed applications and submitted their rankings during the Arts Commission meeting on November 10. Commissioner

Vergotis recused themselves from ranking of one of the organizations due to current association. As such, the final ranking was based on the average score of each applicant.

Following tabulation and discussion, Commissioners proposed fully funding the top four (averaged) proposals: The Bridge Music Project (\$4,410), Collaborative Association for Reintegration & Education (CARE) (\$5,000), West Central Park Project (\$3,965), and Earthbound Productions (\$2,130). Commissioners also agreed to reduce the funding request from Arbutus Folk School to \$4,495 each to meet the budget of \$20,000 available.

The Bridge Music Project | Community Songwriting Workshops for Underserved Youth

The Bridge will host an eight-week songwriting workshop in Olympia where youth will work as teams to write, record, and perform original music that shares their stories. This program will specifically include youth who have faced major life challenges such as foster care, homelessness, and incarceration.

For youth, this project will be an opportunity to develop their musical skills, learn from experienced musicians and connect with like-minded peers. While many of the youth in this program have experienced similar challenges, they will be brought together not because of any struggle but rather their shared interest in creativity.

Collaborative Association for Reintegration & Education (CARE) | Reintegration Through Arts & Culture

This collaborative project between Olympia Lamplighters and CARE offers Arts-Based Peer Counseling and Olympia Lamplighters Scholarships to justice and system impacted youth and young adults (Y-YAs). We are seeking funds to expand our Peer Navigator program and reach 30 more Y-YAs over the next year. CARE's arts-based peer counseling sessions utilize a strengths-based psychosocial perspective, highlighting the mind-body connection and emphasizing improved quality of life, social connectedness, and a sense of agency among Y-YAs. These peer counseling sessions take place both in the community and at Olympia Lamplighters' creative workspace. Olympia Lamplighters Scholarships provide Y-YAs with access to an art gallery and fully equipped creative space that offers a resource library, art classes, sound engineering/music lessons, and support in all creative endeavors.

West Central Park Project | West Central Park Project 2023 Summer Arts Event Schedule

West Central Park Project is dedicated to fostering recreational, educational, economic, and creative needs of the community in which it sits. This grant will help us provide for the creative needs of the community by presenting 12 music events. The funds will allow us to give stipends to the musical artists and cover the infrastructure costs needed for the event season June to October: 5 months. In addition, WCP space and stage is used by other creative partners such as the open mic sessions "A Mic for Us" and the Sunday DrumCircle. Our space is also used by the West Central Park Neighborhood Center for their Saturday Market hosting food, crafts, art and music. For our partners, the WCP provides the infrastructure: taxes, insurance, water, garbage, grounds maintenance and porta potty rental. Visitors to the park may enjoy 3-5 free scheduled cultural events every week during the 5 month "summer" period.

Earthbound Productions | Luminary Procession and Luminary Workshops

Grant funds will be used to cover: Studio rental space for staging and preparing for the two Luminary Processions; production costs (e.g. maintaining/repairing the art pieces, installing new lights,

transporting lanterns, creating new lanterns for public use in the processions, advertising/flyers for events, permits/fees); studio rental space for art workshops; workshop teacher stipends; art materials and supplies; stipends for musicians/dance group; volunteer appreciation; event insurance.

Arbutus Folk School | Arbutus Folk School Accessibility Initiative

GACO funding would allow Arbutus Folk School to offer hands-on, low-cost art classes dedicated to underserved community members of all ages, expanding the number of people and the backgrounds of people who come through our doors. Underserved audiences include people of color, LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, people who identify as immigrants or refugees, people whose first (or only) language is not English, and people most impacted by social/economic inequities.

Other organizations that submitted applications include: Emerald City Music, Olympia Arts and Heritage Alliance, Capital City Chorus of Olympia, Thurston Climate Action Team, Melodies in Motion, and Harlequin Productions.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

The grants to Arts and Culture Organizations awarded will help provide equitable access to the arts for all Olympians.

Options:

1. Approve the grants to area arts and culture organizations for 2023.
2. Make alternate recommendations to the grants.
3. Do not approve the grants to area arts and culture organizations for 2023.

Financial Impact:

\$20,000 from the Municipal Art Fund.

Attachments:

The Bridge Music Project Application
Collaborative Association for Reintegration & Education (CARE) Application
West Central Park Project Application
Earthbound Productions Application
Arbutus Folk School Application