

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION

Allocation of funds to artists and arts groups serving Bellevue through the Eastside Arts Partnerships, Special Projects, and Power Up Funding Programs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staff requests action from Council on the Arts Commission's recommended funding allocations for the 2021 the Eastside Arts Partnerships (EAP), Special Projects, and Power Up programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Move to approve the Arts Commission recommendations for 2021 Eastside Arts Partnerships, Special Projects, and Power Up allocations.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Since 2001, the City Council has allocated annual funding generated by the General Fund to support artists and arts organizations that provide arts, cultural, and heritage programs and services in Bellevue. Funding recommendations are developed through an in-depth application process administered by the Arts Program and evaluated by the Arts Commission Allocations Committee. The Committee includes three members of the Arts Commission and two arts professionals who are familiar with grant-making and the local arts community. The Committee considered the quality of the creative engagement, the public benefits generated for Bellevue residents and visitors, and the organizational capacity and sustainability of the applicants. Please see Attachment A for more information about the review criteria and process for the two funding programs. Following is a brief description of each program and its purpose.

Focus on Organizational Support: Eastside Arts Partnerships (EAP)

EAP provides operating support to nonprofit organizations that offer high-quality arts, cultural, and heritage programs in Bellevue. EAP funding encourages diverse arts and cultural offerings, quality programming and sustainability; arts access for Bellevue residents; artistic, managerial and fiscal excellence; and greater cooperation among arts groups. New funding levels were established in 2018: Community Partners for awards up to \$5,000; and Pro Partners for awards up to \$10,000. Community Partners offer volunteer-based organizations a simplified application process that stresses excellence in community engagement, while Pro Partners is designed for organizations with paid staff and stresses excellence in professional quality art and cultural experiences.

Project Support: The Special Projects Program

Special Projects foster creativity and innovation in the arts and access to art, culture, and heritage by new and under-served people and communities. Project funding encourages innovative projects by artists and communities that fill in cultural gaps and inspire new forms of creative participation, particularly for under-served groups.

Focus on Capacity Building: Power Up

Power Up is a funding program aimed at building organizational capacity. The program responds to needs heard from arts nonprofits and aims to strengthen their ability to fulfill their mission and increase their capacity to serve Bellevue residents and visitors. The program provides project funding, a learning community, and technical assistance to Eastside Arts Partners.

2021 Funding Recommendations Overview

On October 27, the Arts Commission has accepted the Allocation Committee's recommendation that \$145,000 be allocated between three funding programs, Eastside Arts Partnerships, Power Up and Special Projects. This amount represents 57 percent of the total funding requests. Arts organizations and artists working in Bellevue submitted 42 grant applications totaling \$255,711 in funding requests. In addition, five organizations submitted Power Up proposals for a total of \$25,000 in requests. A list of each proposed allocation and a brief description is attached (Attachment A). These recommendations are consistent with previous years' recommendations approved by Council.

Eastside Arts Partnerships: Thirty-two applications were submitted, and the total funds requested was \$210,211. The applicant pool included 29 organizations funded in previous years and three new applications. The Committee recommends funding all applications with a total of \$112,550. This would represent 78 percent of the total grant allocations. The average award would be \$3,517, which is 54 percent of the applicants' average request of \$6,569. Please see Attachment A for more information on specific allocations.

Special Projects: Ten applications were submitted, and the total funds requested was \$45,500. The applicant pool included one project renewal application submitted by applicants who received a 2020 Special Project award and nine new Special Project applications. The Committee recommends funding all applications for a total of \$17,450. This would represent 12 percent of the total grant allocations. The average award would be \$1,745, which is 38 percent of the applicants' average request of \$4,550. Please see Attachment A for more information on specific allocations.

Power Up: Five applications were submitted by organizations in the Eastside Arts Partnerships program, and the total funds requested was \$25,000. The Committee recommends funding three of the five applications with a total of \$15,000. Each award would be \$5,000. Please see Attachment A for more information on specific allocations.

Access, Public Benefits, and Results

Artists and arts groups funded by the City will serve an estimated 1,292,226 residents and visitors in 2021 through in-person and virtual programs, performances, cultural festivals, and arts education. City support will ensure over 520,218 people have access to these opportunities through free or reduced admissions. An additional 10,798 youth will be provided with scholarships to participate in arts

education programs. Overall, grantees will offer programs designed to increase access for people with disabilities; disadvantaged youth or seniors; low-income people; limited-English speaking people; and historically disadvantaged minorities. These arts and cultural organizations and projects will also support higher levels of creative civic engagement. An estimated total of 2,484 artists and 5,728 volunteers will have the opportunity to contribute their creative talents to Bellevue in 2021. A little over half of artist opportunities will be paid, and the total contributed volunteer labor hours is equivalent to 61¹ full-time paid positions.

PROPOSED RESULTS (based on estimates for the grant year)	2019	2020²	2021
PARTICIPATION: Total people served through a live experience	931,971	1,634,706	1,292,226
PARTICIPATION: Bellevue residents served through a live experience	194,813	431,736	509,383
CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: Paid Artists	1,342	1,342	1,329
CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: Volunteer Artists	1,242	1,387	1,155
CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: Volunteers	4,457	4,832	5,728
CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT: Volunteer Hours	126,796	172,561	127,934
PUBLIC BENEFITS: Total free or reduced tickets offered	153,687	133,127	520,218
PUBLIC BENEFITS: Scholarships	2,453	2,878	10,798

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

The Eastside Arts Partnerships, Special Projects, and Power Up funding programs are supported by the following adopted City policies, which support new and existing arts organizations in Bellevue and encourage the development of a creative ecosystem to support Bellevue’s residents and businesses.

Comprehensive Plan

- UD-13. Support and encourage art and arts programs that facilitate involvement, engagement, communication, understanding, and respect among the City’s diverse population.
- UD-14. Support and encourage development, display and performance opportunities for a wide range of artistic expression throughout the City.
- UD-16. Support and encourage lifelong arts education for all skill levels.
- UD-19. Support artists and arts groups working in the community through City programs and private partnerships.
- ED-14. Recognize the economic development benefits of City and private sector investments in urban amenities like arts and culture, open space and recreational facilities, and high-quality urban design. Strengthen the City’s assets in these areas as an explicit component of the City’s economic development strategy.
- ED-22. Support efforts that promote tourism, hotel, retail and arts businesses.

Cultural Compass

The Cultural Compass, a plan designed to implement arts and cultural policies within the Comprehensive Plan, contains goals and objectives supporting City funding for arts organizations:

¹ Based on the national average of full-time employees working 2,087 hours/year

² Pre-COVID-19 estimates

- Goal 1, “Strengthen Bellevue’s arts and cultural organizations and opportunities for artists, both professional and avocational,”
- Goal 7, “Develop a mix of stable and sustainable public and private sector funding and support mechanisms to strengthen Bellevue’s arts and cultural sector,” and
- Objective 7.1, “Confirm and build the City’s leadership role in supporting arts and culture.”

Diversity Advantage Plan

The Diversity Advantage Plan provides additional direction to support artists and arts groups that promote diversity and inclusion through the arts and culture:

- Civic Engagement-5. Increase support for artists (e.g. funding, exhibition/performance opportunities, etc.) whose work addresses intercultural themes.
- Cultural Competence in the Community-2. Support and produce special events, art exhibits and performances, educational materials, festivals and public information that increase opportunities for cultural interaction and education.

Fiscal Impact

The proposed funding of \$145,000 comes from the General Fund in the 2021-2022 Budget.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the Arts Commission recommendations for 2021 Eastside Arts Partnerships, Special Projects, and Power Up allocations.
2. Do not approve the Arts Commission recommendations and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS & AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

- A. Eastside Arts Partnerships, Power Up, and Special Project goals, review criteria and 2021 funding recommendations

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A