

Information

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

Bellevue Arts Commission

1E-113 or Zoom Meeting, 4:30 pm

City of Bellevue, WA

Partner Presentations

At today's meeting, four Eastside Arts Partnership (EAP) grant recipients will give short presentations about their organization and any upcoming events.

Code and bylaw support: This item is presented to the Commission as it is supported by City Code 3.56.070 item J: "Recommend priorities for funding and allocation of small grants to arts organizations based on eligibility and selection criteria approved by council," along with items B and E.

Background

Staff are piloting a program for the Arts Commission to be better informed about the organizations and events supported by the Commission. The presentations are voluntary for all 2025-26 EAP grant recipients. Today's meeting marks the fourth round of presentations. Below are details about each grantee and their award for the 2025-26 cycle.

Japan Fair

2025-26 Award: \$9,000 each year

Japan Fair's mission is to show the Japanese American contribution to the Bellevue Community. It is the power of Diversity to inspire and to bring communities together.

Japan Fair welcomes Japanese and non-Japanese artists and cultural aficionados to share with Bellevue communities and collaborate on projects to inspire new ideas.

Japanese immigrants arrived in the Bellevue area at the turn of the 20th Century. They helped landowners clear the Bellevue forests to plant strawberries and Blueberries. They helped to create a Bellevue reputation for producing the best strawberries and Blueberries west of the Mississippi.

When WWII exploded with Japan, 120 thousand people of Japanese descent were forcefully moved to 10 camps in the United States. But from these camps, young Japanese American men who were born in the US volunteered to fight for the US in Europe and in the Pacific. The segregated Japanese American 442nd Combat Brigade earned 21 Medal of Honor, 550 Silver Stars, 4,000 bronze stars and 9,000 Purple Heart Medals.

After WWII, the US and Japan became a cornerstone of Pacific Rim Cooperation for Peace. The economic miracle of Japan benefited both the US and Japan, with many Japanese businesses and people arriving in Bellevue.



Japan Fair is a descendant of the City of Bellevue's Japan Festival event of the 1990s. The Bellevue City Executives oversaw the program, and Tom Brooke took over with the Aki Matsuri event at the Bellevue Community College. In 2016, Japan Fair continued the tradition but moved to the Meydenbauer Center with a new mission.

In moving to Meydenbauer Center, Japan Fair expanded our mission to traditional Japanese arts and cultures to include modern trends and technology. Japan Fair embraces the youthful trends and culture, as well as recognizes the Salarymen business mindset that brought post-war Japan out of the annihilation of the war. Japan Fair exhibits traditional tea ceremonies, martial arts, and Sakura-con fashion.

Working with Meydenbauer Center was the right choice as Japan Fair was able to present the diversity of Japanese arts and culture while Meydenbauer's professional staff set up the venue to our requirements. This allowed Japan Fair to assemble eager and motivated volunteers to help offer inspirational and popular exhibits. The City grants gives Japan Fair an enormous moral boost. Japan Fair is very grateful for the years of grants the city has provided us. Japan Fair is a dynamic process and it has adjusted as required to maintain sustainability. Grants are necessary to supplement Japan Fair's Arts, Cultural and Legacy exhibits. We've used Bellevue City Grants to promote new exhibits and workshops, rentals and infrastructure to supplement the vitality of Japan Fair events. Japan Fair is very grateful for the professionalism and consideration that the City of Bellevue Community Development and Arts Program and Grant team has shown our Japan Fair administration with their valuable assistance.

Artma

2025-26 Award: \$3,000 each year

Our mission is to amplify the voices of female, mother, and caregiver artists, recognizing their unique experiences and perspectives as invaluable contributions to our cultural tapestry. Through our belief in the transformative power of art, we strive to foster connections, empathy, and understanding among individuals. We are committed to our social responsibility of spreading art throughout our community, believing that it serves as a catalyst for positive change and collective growth.



Staff Contact

Manette Stamm, Arts Program Analyst
425-452-4064, mstamm@bellevuewa.gov