

July 16, 2018

## **CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM**

### **SUBJECT**

The Bellevue Arts Commission request for Council approval of the 2019 Guidelines for Eastside Arts Partnerships, Special Projects, and Power Up Bellevue funding programs.

### **STAFF CONTACTS**

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### **POLICY ISSUES**

The Eastside Arts Partnerships (EAP), Special Projects, and Power Up Bellevue funding programs are supported by the following adopted City policies that 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:

The City has many adopted policies promoting the arts and artistic engagement by directly supporting artists and arts groups in Bellevue:

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 functional planning document for the Comprehensive Plan, contains goals and objectives supporting City funding for arts organizations:

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.

#### **DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL**

**ACTION**



**DIRECTION**



**INFORMATION ONLY**



If Council approves these guidelines, staff will begin advertising funding opportunities for the EAP, Special Projects, and Power Up Bellevue programs. In addition, staff will begin to build the online grant portal. The portal will greatly increase the efficiency of the application process as well as facilitate monitoring and compliance of the grants. Letters-of-Interest from organizations interested in applying for a grant are due on August 22 and the final application deadline is October 3. At the conclusion of the Study Session, staff will ask Council to adopt the guidelines for EAP, Special Projects, and Power Up Bellevue.

#### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Since 2001, the City Council has allocated annual funding generated from 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 three funding programs are:

##### *Focus on Organizational Support: EAP*

EAP provides operating support to nonprofit organizations that offer high quality arts, cultural, and heritage programs in Bellevue. EAP funding encourages programming quality and sustainability; arts access for Bellevue residents; artistic, managerial and fiscal excellence, and greater cooperation among arts groups.

##### *Focus on Project Support: The Special Projects Program*

Special Projects fosters 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 Bellevue*

Power Up Bellevue is a funding program aimed at building organizational capacity. The program responds to needs from arts nonprofits 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.

#### **Review of Grant Guidelines**

At Council's direction, guidelines for arts funding programs are presented to Council annually for feedback and approval. The Arts Commission recommends continuing with the guidelines as developed last year with the following proposed changes designed to bring operational efficiencies, clarity, and cultural inclusion to the program. A copy of the proposed 2019 EAP and Power Up Bellevue grant guidelines is included as Attachment A and the 2019 Special Project grant guidelines is included as Attachment B.

*Go paperless with an online application system*

The current application includes several different paper forms and documents that are emailed or mailed by applicants. The applications are then circulated by staff to grant reviewers and the Arts Commission for consideration and decision. An online application system will shorten the workflow, improve communication, and increase the capacity for staff to provide quality customer services, such as language assistance. Moreover, an online system with built-in analytics tools would also streamline grant monitoring and reporting, simplifying the compilation of 40 separate grant reports into annual program reports.

*Take the guesswork out of the application process with a letter-of-intent from applicants*

Helping individuals and organizations determine which funding program and funding level is right for them is an intensive effort. Requests for assistance are often made in the week or two before the deadline, or applicants submit a grant application to a program not realizing they don't meet the requirements. A letter-of-intent will help staff verify requirements and determine the most appropriate funding program and level before considerable time and resources are spent on an application by both the applicant and staff.

*Make it easy for community-based organizations and volunteer grant writers to succeed with two levels of funding for the EAP program*

Two thirds of the nonprofit organizations that receive arts grants have a budget under \$200,000, and most have no paid staff. Yet the EAP grant application process can be a burdensome process more aligned with organizations with professional grant writers. As a result, many smaller, community-based organizations struggle to submit a strong application package. To accommodate the needs of community volunteers and make the EAP program more inclusive, two EAP levels will be available: Community Partners and Pro Partners. The difference between them is the award amount, application, and support materials.

- **Community Partners:** Up to \$5,000 and not to exceed 50 percent of total annual budget for organizations with an annual budget less than \$200,000 and primarily run by volunteers who support a community of practice and offer community-based arts and cultural opportunities.
- **Pro Partners:** Up to \$10,000 for organizations with an annual budget at or above \$200,000 and paid staff who present professional-level arts experiences or curriculum-based arts education programs.

Organizations with an annual budget of less than \$200,000 can choose to apply to either the Community Partners or the more robust Pro Partners award. Larger budget organizations that are unable to submit the required materials of a Pro Partner application can apply as Community Partner.

The table below illustrates the differences between the two funding levels as it pertains to eligibility, application requirements, and reporting.

	Community Partners	Pro Partners
Grant Funding	Up to \$5,000 and not to exceed 50 percent of proposed annual budget.	Up to \$10,000.
Budget	Gross receipts under \$200,000.	Gross receipts over \$200,000.
Application	Simplified application form designed for a volunteer grant writer.	Standard application form designed for an experienced grant writer.
Required application materials	~ Estimated FY 2019 Budget. ~ Cash balance statement.	~ Estimated FY 2019 Budget. ~ Cash balance statement. ~ Most recent IRS Form 990 or 990 EZ. ~ Policies and procedures for the annual evaluation of the executive director. ~ 2 work samples.
Optional application materials; Required in 2020	~ 1 work sample.	~ Financial audit or third party financial review. ~ Board approved strategic plan.
Grant Reports	Simplified grant report form focused on results.	Standard grant report form.
Option to Power UP?	Yes	Yes

### **OPTIONS**

1. Adopt the 2019 Eastside Arts Partnership and Power UP Bellevue Grant Guidelines, and the 2019 Special Projects Grant Guidelines, and direct staff to proceed with implementation.
2. Do not adopt the guidelines and provide alternative direction to staff.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Option 1

### **MOTION**

Move to adopt the 2019 Eastside Arts Partnership and Power UP Bellevue Grant Guidelines, and the 2019 Special Projects Grant Guidelines, and direct staff to proceed with implementation.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. 2019 Eastside Arts Partnerships and Power Up Bellevue grant guidelines
- B. 2019 Special Projects grant guidelines
- C. Grant Program Comparison

### **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL DOCUMENT LIBRARY**

N/A