



Pennsylvania

Creative Industries

Powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

AUGUST 26, 2026

**VIRTUAL MICROSOFT TEAMS
MEETING**



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Creative Industries
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COUNCIL MEETING DATES

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – AUGUST 26, 2026 – VIRTUAL

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 8, 2026 – LOCATION (TBD)

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – DECEMBER (DATE TBD) REGULAR

COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 11, 2027 – LOCATION (TBD)

COUNCIL MEMBERS POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Alaquiva, Emmi

1. PA Governor's Residence Preservation Committee
2. La Scuola d'Italia Galileo Galilei – Language School Board Member
3. American Heart Association – Heart Ball

Bartolotta, Senator Camera

No Conflicts Reported

Cappelletti, Senator Amanda

No Conflicts Reported

Ciresi, Representative Joe

1. Steel River Playhouse
2. Kimmel Center

Cohen, Susan

No Conflicts Reported

Goldberg, Susan

1. The Curtis Institute of Music
2. Dickinson College – Bluegrass on the Grass
3. Philadelphia Chamber Music Society
4. Philadelphia Orchestra Association

Gunderson, Natalee

1. The Appell Center for the Performing Arts (York, PA)

Labs, Representative Shelby

No Conflicts Reported

Morgan, Hon. William

No Conflicts Reported

Parks, Jeff

1. ArtsQuest
2. Banana Factory

Stull, Norman

1. Bucks County Symphony
2. Anthracite Symphony
3. Red Hill Community Band
4. Quakertown Band

Vilayphonh, Catzie

1. Asian Arts Initiative
2. Institute for Contemporary Art

Warfield, Tim

1. Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz



Pennsylvania Creative Industries

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Agenda

August 26, 2026

Executive Session 9:00 am

Council Meeting 9:20 am

Virtual Meeting - Microsoft TEAMS

EXECUTIVE SESSION	Legal advice and privileged communications from agency legal counsel regarding grant programming
COUNCIL MEETING	
CALL TO ORDER	Susan Cohen, Chair
ITEM 1 (NO TAB)	Roll Call
ITEM 2 ACTION	Approval of Minutes June 4, 2026, Special Council Meeting
ITEM 3 ACTION (NO TAB)	Recommendation for Consent of Agenda Items: • Authorization for the Executive Director or Chief of Staff to Submit Applications for which State Arts Agencies are Eligible • Authorization for the Executive Director or Chief of Staff to Award Contracts and Grants to Implement the Initiatives as Presented in the Budget, as Approved by the Council at this Meeting • Authorization for the Executive Director or Chief of Staff to Appoint Panelists to Serve on Panels for the 2026-2027 Fiscal Year • <i>Karl Blischke, Executive Director</i>
ITEM 4 ACTION	Recommendations for Creative Catalysts <i>Seth Poppy, Senior Director, Innovation and Visibility</i>
ITEM 5 ACTION	Recommendations for Innovation and Impact Grants <i>Jamie Dunlap, Chief Strategy Officer</i>
ITEM 6 ACTION	Recommendations for Creative Communities Initiative and Guidelines <i>Sarah Merritt, Senior Director, Community Development</i>
ITEM 7 ACTION	Recommendations for PA Creative Asset Program <i>Ian Rosario, Senior Director, Asset Development</i>

ITEM 8 ACTION	Recommendation for Statewide Services - Request for Proposals for the Selection of Creative Business Loan Fund Administrator <i>Amanda Lovell, Senior Director, Workforce and Business Development</i>
ITEM 9 ACTION	Proposed Updates to the Eligibility for Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator Program <i>Amanda Lovell, Senior Director, Workforce and Business Development</i>
ITEM 10 ACTION	Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Grants Budget <i>Amy Gabriele, Chief Financial Officer</i>
ITEM 10	Chair's Report
ITEM 11	Executive Director's Report
ITEM 12	Public Comments
ITEM 13	Adjournment

ITEM 2

Minutes

Minutes
Special Council Meeting
June 4, 2026
9:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS: Chair Cohen, Vice Chair Alaquiva, Mr. Astorino, Senator Bartolotta, Representative Ciresi, Ms. Goldberg, Judge Morgan, Mr. Parks, Ms. Vilayphonh, Mr. Warfield

COUNCIL MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Senator Cappelletti, Ms. Gunderson, Representative Labs, Mr. Stull

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Blischke, Executive Director; Heather Doughty, Chief of Creative Sector Policy and Research Christopher Duerr, Program Manager, Grant Reimbursements & Events; Jamie Dunlap, Chief Strategy Officer; Amy Gabriele, Chief Financial Officer; Norah Johnson, Chief of Staff; Laura Kline, Executive Assistant; Amanda Lovell, Senior Director, Workforce and Business Development; Sarah Merritt, Senior Director, Community Development; Seth Poppy, Senior Director, Innovation and Visibility; and Ian Rosario, Senior Director, Asset Development

GUESTS PRESENT: Amber Sizemore, Chief Counsel, Ashe Prawl, Deputy Legislative Director, Senator Cappelletti's Office, Catherine Richmond Cullen, and Carissa Neary.

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER: Karl Blischke welcomed those in attendance and informed them that the meeting would be recorded for the administrative purpose of minute taking. Mr. Blischke then turned the meeting over to Chair Cohen.

ROLL CALL:

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke called the roll. A quorum was established.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Chair Cohen reminded the Council of the PCA's Conflict of Interest Policy.

ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Cohen asked Council for a motion to approve the March 26, 2026, Council meeting minutes.

Ms. Goldberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Parks seconded the motion.

Ayes: Alaquiva, Astorino, Bartolotta, Ciresi, Cohen, Goldberg, Morgan, Parks, Vilayphonh, Warfield

Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

ITEM 3: Grants Highlights

Karl Blischke, Executive Director

Mr. Blischke noted that this informational item is to highlight recently approved Creative Catalyst grants, which empower Pennsylvania creatives.

While the presenters were joining the meeting, Ms. Dunlap updated the Council from the Americans for the Arts conference, where she is representing Pennsylvania's creative industries among 1,200 national attendees. Dunlap shared that the opening plenary focused on the future of public arts funding. She stated that the session explored whether the future of the arts will be art-sector focused (prioritizing sector sustainability) or cross-sector focused.

Ms. Dunlap introduced Catherine Richmond Cullen, who reported on her Creative Catalyst project, ImagineX. Ms. Richmond Cullen explained that this project was funded by the Council and was matched by a regional foundation and added that the initiative hosted an interactive, career-ready conference for 350 middle school students and educators across nine northeastern Pennsylvania counties. The event featured interactive marketing elements, a dedicated website, and eight diverse creative speakers, including software engineers, fashion designers, and sound engineers, to inspire youth toward creative careers. Data evaluation is currently underway.

Ms. Dunlap then introduced Carissa Neary, Director of the New Castle Public Library, who presented on the Mud Maker series, a partnership with the Penn Ohio Clay Guild, which was funded by a Creative Catalyst grant. Ms. Neary explained that the program serves a four-county region (Lawrence, Butler, Mercer, and Armstrong) and stated that the series re-imagines libraries as community hubs through historical presentations and hands-on clay workshops. Neary reported that following a successful May kickoff, upcoming events include a July 11th feature at Butler County's First Art Program and a newly launched "Mug Club" pairing local coffee with artist showcases to drive workforce and community development.

Chair Cohen thanked both presenters for their reports.

ITEMS 4: Recommendation for Program for Smaller Organizations and Programs

Amy Gabriele, Chief Financial Officer

Ms. Gabriele presented the recommendation to approve guidelines for the Spotlight Program.

Ms. Gabriele stated that this program is for organizations and programs with annual arts revenue between \$10,000 and \$100,000. She explained that the proposed program will launch in August 2026 for the 2027 grant year and will provide reimbursement-based grants of up to \$5,000 per organization. Gabriele reported that the following types of organizations are eligible for this program: Pennsylvania nonprofit organizations, tax-exempt entities, local governments, and fiscally sponsored organizations whose activities align with the Council's strategic priorities. Ms. Gabriele noted that colleges and universities, Pre-K-12 schools, and auxiliary fundraising organizations would be ineligible.

Ms. Gabriele stated that the program is intended to ensure continued operating support and explained that the program will have a reimbursement-based structure to ensure taxpayer accountability. Ms. Gabriele indicated that the program would fill funding gaps for past Creative Sector Flex Fund recipients to prevent lapses in state operating support.

Ms. Gabriele reported that the program will be administered directly by staff to reduce overhead costs. She indicated that this central infrastructure would utilize the existing state grant system and internal controls. Gabriele indicated that technical assistance will also be provided via Keystone login help desks, other state agency help desks, and specialized agency staff members.

Public Comment and Responses:

1. Jonathan Stein, thINKingDANCE.net and Philadelphia Dance Projects: Mr. Stein applauded the Council for reconsidering and reversing the October decision to eliminate small arts programming support. Mr. Stein criticized the decision to centralize administration in Harrisburg rather than using the regional partnership system and noted that the regional system historically provided localized outreach, vital technical application help for low-staff groups, and local community review panels.

Ms. Gabriele responded to the public comment with data supporting the shift to centralized management. She stated that regional partners returned \$450,000 in grant and residency funds over the past two years due to a lack of applications. One area returned 70% of residency funds; another county received zero grants in six years.

Gabriele explained that capacity challenges occurred regionally, with over a 70% turnover rate in key partner staff positions during the last five years. Gabriele confirmed that statewide coverage remains a priority and stated that agency staff is actively conducting nine grant workshops this month (including hybrid and virtual options) and performs ongoing geographical data analysis to ensure geographic distribution. She added that each year, Council reviews funding parameters and may consider factors such as geographic and county distribution.

2. Susannah Faulkner, Erie Arts in Culture: Ms. Faulkner stressed the partners' role in ongoing support and capacity building, noting that over the past three years, Erie Arts & Culture met with applicants at least two times on average through the Creative Sector Flex Fund. Faulkner stated that support extended beyond technical assistance to include significant guidance and capacity building. She raised concerns about the future role of trusted community organizations that no longer administer the grant but continue to assist and promote opportunities to applicants. She noted that these partners have demonstrated strong stewardship of public funds, rarely returned grant dollars, and emphasized that many eligible organizations are volunteer-run and rely on local partners for support. Ms. Faulkner suggested that experienced partners should continue to have a meaningful role in the network, even if they do not directly administer funds.

Ms. Dunlap responded that partnerships are subject to a competitive bidding process every five years, meaning no partner is guaranteed long-term status. She added that the current system is designed to ensure fairness and openness, as all partnerships were put on an open call.

Ms. Dunlap indicated that a service provider network is currently in mid-stage development across the Commonwealth. She stated that the network will support regional and local promotion of opportunities, grant workshops, and technical assistance. Dunlap added that requirements for service providers will include delivering these support services.

Ms. Dunlap stated that a network will be developed in collaboration with the Department of Community and Economic Development and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. She reported that guidelines are being finalized and will undergo internal review and Council approval before being posted and added that interested parties can expect webinars and direct calls for more information once the program is approved.

3. Mitch Swain, Creative PA: Mr. Swain made his comment as a board member of Creative Pennsylvania on behalf of Board Chair Kelley Gibson. Swain thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and for tabling the previous grant proposal for smaller organizations. He expressed appreciation for staff's work to address initial concerns with the Spotlight Program and for the opportunity to collaborate with PCI staff, noting that this type of collaboration will be important moving forward.

Mr. Swain supported the concerns of Ms. Faulkner and Mr. Stein, emphasizing that the current partnership program's local support is irreplaceable. He warned PCI may underestimate the assistance required and stressed the need for local communication. He clarified his critique was programmatic, not personal toward PCI staff, and expressed concern over the disparity between two-minute limits for public commenters and unlimited speaking time for staff.

4. Patrick Fisher, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council: Mr. Fisher thanked PCA leadership for reconsidering the small organization grant proposal and affirmed partners' desire to collaborate. Addressing field concerns, he suggested reviewing why returned PCA funds are frequently linked to a lack of eligible applications rather than application volume, emphasizing the importance of technical assistance. He also noted his organization's intent to end its partnership role due to administrative burdens exceeding the fee, advising PCA to build stronger internal staff capacity for program support.
5. Stephanie Lerner, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance: Ms. Lerner thanked meeting participants for their feedback and contributions to the grant development process. She acknowledged the inclusion of fiscal sponsorship and arts programs as positive steps.
6. Jane Altman, River Art Works: Ms. Altman expressed appreciation for current efforts but highlighted two main issues: a financial disparity in grant distribution favoring large organizations, and overly complex, burdensome application forms that discourage individual artists and smaller groups. She suggested simplifying forms to improve response rates and noted her organization is compiling artist lists to enhance outreach.
7. Terry Fox, Philadelphia Dance Projects: Ms. Fox expressed gratitude to the Council as a past and current Flex Fund recipient and urged the following grant program updates: Grant Expansion: Allow fiscal sponsorship and include general operating support alongside project-specific funds; Regional Focus: Prioritize regional partnerships, as local communities best understand their own impact; and, Public Comment: Extend the public comment period beyond two minutes, noting no state rule mandates this limit.

Ms. Gabriele addressed the comment about the application itself in relation to small arts organizations, because small arts organizations can and do have the capacity to be accountable.

8. Eric César Morales, Movimiento de Organizadores de Arte in Pennsylvania: Mr. Morales commended recent grant program improvements, including fiscal sponsorship and the \$5,000 funding cap, but raised concerns regarding transparency, financial strain on organizations, reduced technical assistance, and declining participation among rural and underserved groups. He requested detailed technical

assistance data, equitable participation tracking, and adaptive early detection mechanisms.

Ms. Gabriele stated that the reimbursement process is simple and is supported by experienced staff members. Chair Cohen added that reimbursements can be submitted on a rolling basis throughout the year, allowing partial payments.

9. Dennis Creedon: Philadelphia Arts & Education Fellowship: Mr. Creedon thanked the Council for its support and advocated for continued arts and education funding, sharing how such programs were pivotal to his own educational success with dyslexia. He highlighted the administrative challenge of last-minute grant matching withdrawals and urged the Council to maintain its partnership.
10. Rita Whitney, Cultural Alliance of York County: Ms. Whitney highlighted the Cultural Alliance of York County's progress in fund distribution, noting full allocation by year three despite initial county-level challenges. She explained that equitable distribution requires trust-based relationship-building over forms, which helped double BIPOC applicants using direct outreach and one-on-one connections.
11. Justin Ayala, Cultural Alliance of York County: Mr. Ayala cited high turnover in grant roles due to flat funding, uncompetitive pay, and expanded duties. He cautioned that the Council lacks capacity to re-centralize grant administration and warned that doing so risks losing established regional partnerships.

Chair Cohen noted that three regional partners have already withdrawn this year.

12. Patricia Wilson Aden, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance (GPCA): Ms. Aden noted that the GPCA represents over 400 artists and organizations and welcomed funding progress for groups with budgets under \$100,000. She emphasized the pent-up grant demand in southeastern Pennsylvania and cautioned against centralizing administration at the expense of regional, personalized support. Aden also offered to partner with agency staff on Philadelphia-area informational workshops and advocated for preserving regional partners.
13. Sisi Wright, Directors Gathering: Ms. Wright provided written comment and acknowledged that the proposed Spotlight Program responds to public feedback by restoring eligibility for fiscally sponsored projects and continuing support for organizations previously served by the Creative Sector Flex Fund. She raised concerns that the program creates new barriers for small-budget organizations, including reimbursement-based funding, financial risk, reduced grant amounts, increased administrative requirements, and unclear details about the proposed Service Provider Network. She also questioned the use of "financial stability" as an evaluation criterion for organizations still developing infrastructure. Ms. Wright encouraged Council to reconsider the approach and expressed hope for continued collaboration to ensure the program effectively serves Pennsylvania's small organizations and communities.

Chair Cohen asked Council if there were any questions. Hearing none, Chair Cohen asked for a motion to approve the recommendation as presented in the Council meeting materials.

Judge Morgan made a motion to approve the recommendations. Mr. Warfield seconded the motion.

Ayes: Alaquiva, Astorino, Bartolotta, Ciresi, Cohen, Goldberg, Morgan, Parks, Vilayphonh, Warfield
Motion carried, none abstained or opposed.

Parks requested to speak after the motion and Chair Cohen granted this request.

Mr. Parks expressed appreciation for the contributions of speakers and their organizations in advancing the arts and raising awareness of Council programs. He said that these concerns are acknowledged, but noted that they may be misdirected, as the Council is a state agency funded by the Legislature. Mr. Parks noted that arts funding has remained stationary at \$9 million since it was reduced from \$15 million in 2007–2008, with no increases since then. Parks noted that the Council has implemented strategies to leverage limited funds and maximize benefits for artists and arts communities across the Commonwealth. Parks indicated that structural changes, such as phasing out regional agencies established in the 1990s, were necessary due to technological advances and budget constraints. Mr. Parks added that the number of arts organizations in Pennsylvania has more than doubled in the last 20 years, while funding has not kept pace. He stated that legislators face competing priorities across healthcare, senior and youth services, and economic development. Parks encouraged the public to contact their legislators during budget discussions to advocate for increased arts funding.

Chair Cohen thanked Mr. Parks for his comments.

Chair Cohen reported that workshops will be held across the Commonwealth from June 8th to July 8th and added that details are available on the Council's website or by calling the agency. Chair Cohen recognized and thanked Council and staff for their hard work and dedication in serving urban, suburban, and rural areas despite limited resources.

Public Comments:

1. Veronica Castilla Perez, Movimiento Administradores de Arte (MAP) Pennsylvania: Ms. Perez thanked Chair Cohen, Council members, and staff for the opportunity to speak and for efforts to support smaller organizations. She stated that MAP was founded to help Latino communities and small arts groups access PCA funding and requested clarification on the status of Strategies for Success. She also urged Council to reconsider eliminating Preserving Diverse Cultures as an important outreach channel for Latino communities.
2. Jonathan Stein, thINKingDANCE.net and Philadelphia Dance Projects: Mr. Stein raised concerns that major programs, including Arts in Education, Preserving Diverse Cultures, and Folk and Traditional Arts, were eliminated without Council approval or vote. He stated that these actions bypassed governance protocols and urged Council to restore the programs to avoid legislative intervention. He also referenced Patrick Fisher's arts blog criticizing the planning process and requested that copies be shared with Council.

Emailed Additional Comments: Mr. Stein also asked Council to explain why five vacancies remain on the 15 non-legislative member roster established by the General Assembly and why the Council is not enforcing the statutory two-term limit. He stated that councils and boards have a responsibility to comply with these requirements rather than passively awaiting appointments or replacements.

Mr. Blischke replied that the planning process occurred over many months and was discussed transparently during public Council meetings, with minutes available on the PA Creative Industries website. He said the new programs were developed through an inclusive process to provide flexible support, technical assistance, and networking for a broad range of communities and organizations.

3. Patrick Fisher, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council: Mr. Fisher stated that PCA should take the findings of its 2024 listening process seriously. He said respondents prioritized cross-cultural collaboration, diversity, rural access, community cultural planning, training, and networking, indicating a need for capacity-building and local infrastructure rather than funding alone. He expressed concern that recent program eliminations do not align with those priorities, while new initiatives focused on innovation and creative industry growth ranked lower among respondents.
4. Patricia Wilson Aden, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance: Ms. Aden stated that increasing arts funding remains a statewide priority and that advocacy with elected officials is ongoing. She noted that Pennsylvania trails neighboring states in arts funding and emphasized that new initiatives should not come at the expense of established programs. She supported the proposed \$5 million increase to expand funding, impact, and programming.
5. Susannah Faulkner, Erie Art & Culture: Ms. Faulkner expressed concern about the impact of PCA program changes and noted that many comments reflected broader statewide concerns. She emphasized the need for PCA and the arts community to move forward together, repair relationships, and address divisions caused by the transition. She noted particular concern for artists and organizations in Erie Arts & Culture's six-county region that may be affected by the end of the Regional Partnership Program model.

Chair Cohen stated that staff are working hard to address these needs as quickly as possible. She acknowledged the concerns raised and indicated that staff are moving forward with urgency.

6. Justin Ayala, Cultural Alliance of York County: Mr. Ayala stated that the Arts in Education program has supported PCA's goals related to culture, education, economic vitality, equitable access, and lifelong learning. He expressed concern that eliminating the program would reduce student access to teaching artists and arts-related career pathways. He also questioned how prior investments in Creative Aging and Academy for Creative Aging training will be used if related opportunities are reduced.
7. Stephanie Lerner, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance: Mr. Lerner echoed concerns about the abrupt ending of partnerships and said defensiveness, poor communication, and limited information sharing have caused stress in the arts sector. She called for a cross-sector approach to repair harm, strengthen collaboration, and advocate for increased statewide arts funding. She also noted that some partners were not included in the regional information workshop.
8. Jeremy Waak, Artist: Mr. Waak spoke in support of the Arts in Education program, stating that it gave working artists valuable opportunities to engage students and show that arts careers are possible. He acknowledged the challenge of distributing limited funds but said recent decisions have harmed the arts community. He encouraged Council to recognize

that relationships, collaboration, networking, and partnerships are central to the arts ecosystem.

9. Mitch Swain, Creative Pennsylvania: Mr. Swain emphasized the need to clearly explain how increased arts funding would be allocated. He described a proposed \$14.59 million PCA budget, including a \$5 million increase, to support both traditional grants and partnerships and new creative enterprise initiatives. He noted continued advocacy with legislative leadership and appropriations committees and expressed hope for an increase in the state arts grant line item.

Ms. Dunlap clarified that arts education is supported through multiple funding streams, including operational support grants and other mechanisms beyond a single partnership program. She stated that arts education occurs widely across Pennsylvania through both in-school and out-of-school programs. She also cited strong statewide arts and music education offerings and continued collaboration with the Department of Education.

10. Dennis Creedon, Philadelphia Art & Education Partnership: Mr. Creedon expressed concern about instability among partner organizations following the announcement that the Arts and Education Partnership would end. He emphasized the need to review survey data from multiple perspectives and consider how findings are interpreted and implemented. He also stated that returning unused or non-viable project funds reflects responsible fiscal stewardship and highlighted the Philadelphia partnership's 23-year contribution.
11. Eric Cesar Morales, Movimiento Administradores de Arte (MAP) Pennsylvania: Mr. Morales raised concerns about equity, inclusion, and transparency in the process, stating that members of his community feel underrepresented and invisible. He questioned whether the survey was accessible in Spanish and whether outreach to diverse communities was adequate. He also criticized reimbursement-based funding models as burdensome and emphasized that diversity strengthens decision-making.
12. Terry Fox, Philadelphia Dance Projects: Ms. Fox shared appreciation for colleagues' comments and encouraged continued collaboration to ensure effective and smooth implementation of programs.
13. Sisi Wright, Directors Gathering: Ms. Wright echoed concerns about the abrupt ending of partnerships and the stress caused by poor communication, defensiveness, and limited information sharing. She emphasized the need for a cross-sector approach to heal damage, rebuild trust, and pursue increased statewide arts funding. She also stated that the strategic planning process was not fully inclusive.

ITEM 17: Adjournment

Chair Cohen thanked Council members, staff, and public speakers for their participation and engagement throughout the meeting. An update was shared that progress is moving forward on the Small Spotlight Grants program, which is expected to launch soon.

The Chair noted that public comments are part of the official record and expressed appreciation for ongoing participation from the creative community. It was reiterated that Council meetings are open to the public and are conducted in accordance with open meeting requirements, with information available on the Council's website.

Chair Cohen asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Representative Ciresi made the motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Alaquiva seconded the motion.

ITEM 4

Recommendations for Creative Catalysts



MEMO

DATE: August 14, 2026
TO: Council Members
FROM: Seth Poppy, Senior Director of Innovation and Visibility
CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director
RE: Recommendations for Creative Catalyst Grants

MESSAGE:

Creative Catalyst grants support new initiatives and opportunities that advance strategies for empowering, connecting and amplifying creatives and creative industries and their contributions to Pennsylvania's communities, economy and workforce.

This funding opportunity is designed to encourage and support projects and events that have the potential for statewide or broad regional impact on the creative sector. Creative Catalyst grants are not designed to provide ongoing support or to fund projects that occur on an annual or regular basis, but rather to help support special events or unique, strategic opportunities.

Applications to this program are assessed based on the degree to which they:

- 1.) Align with one or more of Pennsylvania Creative Industries' five key areas.
- 2.) Demonstrate statewide or broad regional reach and benefit.
- 3.) Demonstrate capacity to carry out project as proposed.

The Creative Catalyst grant program has four application deadlines per fiscal year, or until the funds have been allocated. The first deadline for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 was June 11.

Staff received more than 90 direct program inquiries, with 26 eligible applications submitted, totaling \$425,750 in requests. If approved, there will remain an anticipated \$224,250 in Creative Catalyst funds for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

Staff presents the following recommendations for Creative Catalyst support in Fiscal Year 2026-2027:

1. Applicant: Hope Center For Arts And Technology

County: Mercer

Proposal: Creative Pathways: Neurodiverse Professional Arts Initiative

The Creative Pathways: Neurodiverse Professional Arts Initiative will be a specialized workforce development program designed by Hope Center for Arts and Technology (HopeCAT) in Sharon, PA. This initiative will bridge the gap between vocational arts enrichment and professional creative careers for neurodivergent artists, including those on the autism spectrum. The 'Artist Business' curriculum, which includes professional studio practice, administrative literacy, market integration, workplace soft skills, and mentorship, will be shared across the Strickland Global Leadership Institute network.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

2. Applicant: K Cul Foundation DbA Korean Cultural Foundation

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: Next Korea | Creative Media Lab

Next Korea | Creative Media Lab will be a youth-led cultural media initiative developed by KCul Foundation in partnership with the Korea Times Philadelphia. The project will engage Korean American high school students as writers, reporters, and digital storytellers who produce a bilingual Korean-language youth newspaper while documenting immigrant community stories through a Korean Immigration Life & Culture Digital Archive.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

3. Applicant: Proud Haven

County: Allegheny

Proposal: QMNTY Creative Incubator

The QMNTY Creative Incubator will be a community-rooted initiative expanding creative-industry access for TLGBQ youth, young adults, and community members experiencing housing instability, economic precarity, or barriers to traditional workforce pathways. This incubator will provide the structure, mentorship, and visibility needed to turn creative skills into income-generating opportunities and long-term participation in Pennsylvania's creative economy. The incubator will culminate in a Regional Creative Marketplace Showcase that highlights participant work, connecting emerging creators with local creative-industry partners, and strengthening regional creative-sector networks.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

4. Applicant: Barrio Alegría

County: Berks

Proposal: The Belonging Tour -Community Engagement Toolkit workshop series

Barrio Alegría has developed a Community Engagement Toolkit that documents lessons learned through a decade of on-the-ground practice in Reading, Pennsylvania. The toolkit is not a step-by-step formula, but a practical and reflective resource that helps organizations, artists, leaders, and residents rethink how community engagement is approached and practiced. Through *the Belonging Tour*, Barrio Alegría proposes to bring this toolkit to communities across Pennsylvania through a series of interactive presentations, workshops, and facilitated conversations.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

5. Applicant: Pittsburgh Irish Festival Inc

County: Allegheny

Proposal: Celtic Fire Festival Series

The Celtic Fire Festival Series is an innovative new multidisciplinary arts initiative produced by the Irish Partnership of Pittsburgh, dba the Pittsburgh Irish Festival in collaboration with ANAM Arts. Launched recently as a bold expansion of traditional cultural programming, the series reimagines the ancient Celtic seasonal fire festivals — Imbolc (Feb 1), Bealtaine (May 1), Lúnasa (Aug 1), and Samhain (Nov 1) — through a distinctly modern, immersive, arts-driven lens. This model will be formally presented at the 2027 Association of Irish and Celtic Festivals conference as a replicable creative placemaking and arts engagement model that other cities and festivals can adopt.

Request: \$15,000

Recommendation: \$15,000

6. Applicant: The Children’s Museum, Inc.

County: Columbia

Proposal: Creative Futures Lab: Artist Residencies and Maker Pathways

The Bloomsburg Children’s Museum will launch Creative Futures Lab: Artist Residencies and Maker Pathways at the Expanded Bloomsburg Children’s Museum, an 18-month initiative that will activate the Museum’s expanded Maker Space as a regional hub for artist-led learning, creative career exploration, and creative-sector visibility. The project will include two Artist-in-Residence Maker Space Workshop series, regional artist and maker demonstrations, portable outreach kits and mobile programs for schools, libraries and community partners, and a culminating public Creative Futures Showcase.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

7. Applicant: Philly Sound Exchange

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: Bridges Creative Voices Initiative

Bridges Creative Voices Initiative will be a new arts residency program that uses music, storytelling, and collaborative artistic creation to help young people explore identity, race,

belonging, and community. The initiative is built upon *Bridges*, an original student-created musical developed by high school students from diverse racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds across the Philadelphia region. Workshops will include songwriting, poetry, spoken word, drama, instrumental arranging, and documentary production and students will collaborate across differences, share personal stories, and create new works that reflect the diverse voices present within their schools and communities.

Request: \$20,000

Recommendation: \$20,000

8. Applicant: Cosmic Writers Corp Cosmic Writers

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: Alliance for Storytelling in Education (ASE)

Cosmic Writers, a literacy nonprofit that uses storytelling education to build children's core reading and writing skills, will develop the Alliance for Storytelling in Education (ASE), a new initiative for education leaders, to elevate innovative uses of storytelling across the education industry. Storytelling is an interdisciplinary tool for achieving a broad range of education goals, all the while shaping students' thinking processes in a way that embeds creativity in their analytical and logical reasoning skills. The coalition, composed of classroom teachers, education administrators, researchers, university professors, education nonprofit leaders, and government officials, will convene monthly to present case studies, create a resource library, and form working groups to address specific challenges.

Request: \$8,000

Recommendation: \$8,000

9. Applicant: University of Scranton

County: Lackawanna

Proposal: NEPA Regional Exhibition 2027

The Hope Horn Gallery at the University of Scranton (Lackawanna County), in partnership with the Pauly Friedman Gallery at Misericordia University (Luzerne County), will present the Northeastern Pennsylvania Juried Regional Exhibition 2027, a two-venue, juried, regional exhibition of visual art from Lackawanna, Wyoming, Susquehanna, Wayne, Pike, Monroe, Northampton, Lehigh, Berks, Schuylkill, Carbon, and Luzerne Counties.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

10. Applicant: Central Pennsylvania Music Hall Of Fame

County: Dauphin

Proposal: 2026 Pennsylvania Music Industry Summit

The 2026 Pennsylvania Music Industry Summit will be a one-day professional development and workforce development event designed to empower, connect, and amplify musicians, music industry professionals, educators, students, and creative entrepreneurs across

Pennsylvania. On November 8, 2026, at the Englewood in Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, the Summit will bring together approximately 200–250 attendees from throughout Central Pennsylvania and neighboring regions including State College, Wilkes–Barre, Harrisburg, Hershey, Lancaster, York, and surrounding communities. The event will provide direct access to industry experts, educational resources, career development opportunities, and professional networking, all of which will help strengthen Pennsylvania's music ecosystem.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

11. Applicant: Village Theater Company DbA the Lindsay Theater And Cultural Center

County: Allegheny

Proposal: Emerging Filmmakers Showcase

The Emerging Filmmakers Showcase (EFS) will provide early career filmmakers from across Pennsylvania with their first cinematic exhibition, including venue, audience, mentoring, technical and marketing support. In addition to strengthening emerging artist portfolios and increasing chances for festival selections, awards and commercial exhibitions, EFS will connect creatives to each other and the public, empower participation of diverse and rarely heard voices in cinema from urban, suburban and rural communities, and provide a model for finding audiences for subsequent films.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

12. Applicant: Ego Po Inc DbA EgoPo Productions

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: PA Access Initiative – Mid-Atlantic Regional College Auditions

EgoPo Classic Theatre produces the Mid-Atlantic Regional College Auditions (MARCAS), a recruitment event which enables high school students from PA, NJ, DE, MD, VA and WV to audition once to more than 60 national college theater and dance programs from more than a dozen states. The PA Access Initiative will triple participation statewide and is designed to create opportunities for students from underserved school districts in central and western PA by offering technical assistance, free registration, free or subsidized transportation for students, and free workshop and training videos.

Request: \$12,500

Recommendation: \$12,500

13. Applicant: Susquehanna University

County: Snyder

Proposal: Literary Arts Career Catalyst

The Writers Institute at Susquehanna University (SU) will launch the Literary Arts Career Catalyst, a strategic outreach initiative connecting the university's nationally recognized Writers Institute with under-resourced rural high schools across the central Susquehanna Valley. Developed in collaboration with the PA Career Readiness Coalition, this program

addresses a critical gap in the regional creative ecosystem: the lack of visibility and accessible pathways into the creative industries for rural youth.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

14. Applicant: Erie Art Company

County: Erie

Proposal: OpenFeed- Digital Artist Residency Initiative

Erie Art Company's OpenFeed – Digital Artist Residency Initiative will activate the historic Erie Labor Temple as a regional hub for artist residencies, exhibitions, public programming, and creative workforce development. In partnership with FEED Media Center, the project will develop and deploy the liveFEED Art Box Player, a scalable, digital media kiosk system that standardizes the presentation of video, livestream, and media art across gallery screens. Together, the residency and digital infrastructure will expand artist visibility, strengthen Northwestern PA's creative ecosystem, and create a replicable model for broad regional impact across the creative sector.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

15. Applicant: East On Foundation

County: Northampton

Proposal: East ON Fest

East ON Fest will be a free, large-scale, immersive arts event that will transform downtown Easton, Pennsylvania, into a walkable public gallery featuring architectural projection mapping, light-based installations, and community arts programming. This will be the first festival of its kind in the region and in Pennsylvania. East ON Fest will take place September 18 and 19, 2026 in Centre Square and surrounding civic spaces, and will feature approximately 15 commissioned artist installations and interventions across multiple downtown sites at night. The festival's commissioning of regional, national, and international artists will signal to the creative community that Pennsylvania is a place where ambitious public art is produced and celebrated.

Request: \$15,500

Recommendation: \$15,500

16. Applicant: Greater Philadelphia YMCA

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: Tech Achievers: Pathways to the Creative Economy

YMCA of Greater Philadelphia will launch Tech Achievers, an innovative program that merges the proven career-readiness framework of Y Achievers with the immersive, hands-on learning environment of the Teen Tech Center (TTC). Tech Achievers is designed to equip North Philadelphia teens in grades 9–11 with in-demand technical skills, workplace competencies, and the soft skills needed to succeed in Pennsylvania's growing creative

economy, bridging persistent opportunity gaps and creating clear pathways to postsecondary education, meaningful employment, and long-term economic mobility.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

17. Applicant: The Philharmonic Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania

County: Susquehanna

Proposal: Hometown Concerts Initiative

In 2026 and 2027, as part of its Hometown Concerts initiative, the Philharmonic Society of Northeastern Pennsylvania seeks to expand its annual program of chamber music concerts and community engagement to additional small towns and rural counties across Northeastern Pennsylvania. (Until recently, this series was primarily presented in Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.) The expanded project will serve residents of rural and underserved counties, communities, and small towns across the region, including Wayne, Wyoming, Monroe, Susquehanna, Bradford, Sullivan, and Pike Counties.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

18. Applicant: Azuka Theatre Collective Db a Azuka Theatre

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: The Playwrights' Forum

The Playwrights' Forum will be a new initiative from Azuka Theatre designed to strengthen Pennsylvania's creative workforce by investing directly in playwrights, the artists responsible for generating the stories, intellectual property, and cultural products that fuel the performing arts sector. Over the course of a three-day convening, Pennsylvania-region playwrights will gather for a structured experience focused on craft development, professional networking, artistic collaboration, and career sustainability.

Request: \$6,250

Recommendation: \$6,250

19. Applicant: Waldo's and Company

County: Adams

Proposal: Waldo's Artist Retreat

Waldo's and Company, a creator-led community arts and event space in Gettysburg, will launch Waldo's Artist Retreat, a new annual program designed to stretch our creative community and educational work far beyond the usual local crowd. Hosted in Waldo's multi-modal studio space in Adams County, Pennsylvania, this initiative will bring people together from all over the state and beyond for a full week of hands-on learning, artistic growth, and real community building. This program will elevate the profile of rural and regional Pennsylvania creators and highlights Adams County as a sophisticated hub for contemporary fine art.

Request: \$5,000

Recommendation: \$5,000

20. Applicant: Valley in Motion

County: Lackawanna

Proposal: Fall at the Furnaces

Fall at the Furnaces will be a performance arts and cultural events series hosted at the Scranton Iron Furnaces, led by Valley In Motion (VIM), and in partnership with Scranton Fringe Festival (SFF), Scranton Shakespeare Festival (SSF), and the Anthracite Heritage Museum (AHM). This collaborative effort will leverage arts and cultural events to catalyze the Iron Furnaces as a renewed center of Scranton life – not just a place of history, but a living center of artistic and cultural significance for today.

Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

21. Applicant: New Hazlett Center for the Performing Arts Dba New Hazlett Theater

County: Allegheny

Proposal: New Hazlett Center for the Performing Arts Workforce Development Program

New Hazlett Theater (NHT) will launch a new technical theater workforce development pathway focused initially on lighting and sound technicians. The project will create a structured, paid, partnership-based entry point into creative industry jobs that are too often accessed only through informal networks, personal connections, and early exposure to theater production. By making the pathway explicit and visible, NHT and its partners will help students without existing industry relationships or social capital gain the training, experience, mentorship, and contacts needed to pursue technical theater careers.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

22. Applicant: Rize Program

County: Berks

Proposal: Roots of Solidarity: Youth-Led Creative Workforce and Cultural Preservation Initiative

Roots of Solidarity: A RIZE Youth-Led Creative Workforce and Cultural Preservation Initiative, will be a youth media, preservation, and public storytelling project rooted in Reading, Pennsylvania, with engagement across Berks, Chester, and Monroe Counties. The project will serve youth from Berks, Chester, and Monroe Counties through documentary production, oral history development, youth media training, storytelling, engagement, and archive-building work. Participants will receive training in filmmaking, photography, videography, audio production, interviewing, oral history collection, editing, digital storytelling, public art, marketing, entrepreneurship, leadership, and civic engagement.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

23. Applicant: Pittsburgh Sound and Image

County: Allegheny

Proposal: Southwestern PA Film Archive

Pittsburgh Sound + Image will restore at least ten short films made in Pennsylvania by Pittsburgh area filmmakers, present at least 24 public film screenings based on the newly restored films and conduct film handling and restoration workshops and labs. These films will return, from the cusp of being lost, to local and national audiences, while safeguarding them to professional archival standards. The proposed project will support the upcoming launch of a free online archive, with documents, films, photos, and audio recordings related to Pennsylvania's independent film history.

Request: \$16,500

Recommendation: \$16,500

24. Applicant: Three Aksha

County: Philadelphia

Proposal: Digital Hearth Project

Three Aksha's Digital Hearth Project will create an interactive website and curated digital archive that bring together multimedia recordings, artist resources, and monthly storytelling events to expand access to Indian classical dance, music, and cross-cultural arts education. By combining multimedia learning, statewide artist collaboration, and accessible cultural education, the project will strengthen community connection, expand visibility for diverse artists, and create a lasting digital resource for learners across Pennsylvania and beyond.

Request: \$7,000

Recommendation: \$7,000

25. Applicant: Hedgerow Theatre

County: Delaware

Proposal: Workforce Development Theatre Fellowship

Hedgerow Theatre's workforce development initiative will train people with disabilities and neurodivergent participants in theatre administration, production, design, and related career pathways through tailored internships, mentorship, and hands-on learning. Built with partners including Montgomery County Community College, Delaware County Community College, Temple University, and the Pathway School, the program will provide career readiness support, guest artist training, networking, and post-internship guidance to help participants build lasting connections in the regional theatre field. By expanding Hedgerow's accessibility leadership from audience inclusion to creative workforce development, the project will strengthen pathways for disabled and neurodivergent theatre workers and creates a shareable model for arts organizations across Pennsylvania.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

26. Applicant: Youth Matters UwebTV

County: Allegheny

Proposal: Youth Matters Talk Show Initiative

Youth Matters' Teen-Produced Talk Show Initiative will launch a student-led broadcast hub for the 2026–2027 academic year, giving young people in Southwest Pennsylvania hands-on training in digital storytelling, investigative interviewing, set design, camera operation, audio engineering, lighting, and digital broadcasting. Through partnerships with regional schools and community sites across Allegheny County, the project will bring professional media equipment and weekly production pipelines directly into under-resourced neighborhoods, helping youth bridge the digital divide while building real-world creative workforce skills. By distributing student-produced content through UwebTV.com, social media, and a dedicated Roku channel, the initiative will amplify local youth voices, elevate community narratives, and create a scalable model for youth media training and visibility.

Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

ITEM 5

Recommendations for Innovation and Impact Grants



MEMO

DATE: August 13, 2026
TO: Council Members
FROM: Jamie Dunlap, Chief Strategy Officer
CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director
RE: Recommendations for Innovation and Impact Grants

MESSAGE:

The Creative Innovation and Impact Grant program supports new, multi-year strategies that empower, connect, and amplify creatives and creative industries and their contributions to Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and workforce. Grant applications must demonstrate the ability to extend beyond the applicant's regular programming or services.

The Creative Innovation and Impact Grant program is designed to support initiatives that drive innovation and sector visibility. In alignment with progressing the agency's strategic framework, applications to this program should feature creative sector projects that address either visibility, innovation, or both.

- Visibility – Enhance public awareness of creatives and creative industries through marketing, branding, and outreach efforts.
- Innovation – Support new ideas, models, and partnerships that expand the role of creativity in Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and workforce.

The Creative Innovation and Impact grant has four application deadlines per fiscal year, or until all program funds have been allocated. The first deadline for Fiscal Year 2026–2027 was June 1. We received 17 eligible applications. Based on committee review and alignment with review criteria, staff recommends six applications for this round of funding, for a total of \$870,000.

Descriptions of the proposed projects or programs, as well as location, participating organizations, and respective funding amounts follow:

1. Applicant:

Happy Valley Sports and Entertainment Alliance Inc.

County:

Centre

Proposal:

The Happy Valley Film Commission (three-year proposal)

The Happy Valley Sports & Entertainment Alliance (HVSEA), in partnership with the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau (HVAB), is developing the Happy Valley Film Commission, a regional production attraction and workforce development initiative designed to position Central Pennsylvania as a film-ready creative economy hub. **This initiative addresses a critical gap in Pennsylvania’s creative infrastructure: the lack of coordinated production support and workforce pathways in rural and mid-sized communities outside the Commonwealth’s largest metropolitan markets.** The project introduces an integrated regional model that combines film production attraction, workforce development, tourism activation, and creative industry infrastructure into a scalable ecosystem aligned with Pennsylvania’s Creative Industries priorities.

Request: \$150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

2. Applicant:

Emmaus Creative Arts & Innovation Center (dba JuxtaHub)

County:

Lehigh

Proposal:

Innovation Center (two-year proposal)

JuxtaHub proposes launching the Innovation Center, a new initiative designed to expand Pennsylvania’s creative industries through ethical, accessible, and workforce-oriented arts-and-technology programming.

The Innovation Center responds to two urgent needs: growing demand for accessible technology-based creative learning, and the rapid expansion of tools that are reshaping how artists, educators, and entrepreneurs design, prototype, and share their work. Many of these resources are concentrated in higher education or corporate settings, leaving independent creatives and underserved communities with limited access. JuxtaHub is positioned to close that gap by making high-value technologies available in a community-rooted, artist-centered environment. By launching the Innovation Center, JuxtaHub will support the full design process—from ideation and prototyping to testing, refinement, and public presentation—while building sustainable pathways for earned revenue,

partnerships, and expanded programming. **The initiative will increase organizational visibility, create new opportunities for artists and creative entrepreneurs, and broaden access to tools that help move ideas from concept to realization more efficiently and affordably.**

Request: \$150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

3.Applicant:

The Big Picture Alliance

County:

Philadelphia

Proposal:

Multimedia Workforce Pathway (three-year proposal)

Earlier this year, Big Picture Alliance established PA's first and only State Registered Multimedia Producer Apprenticeship, developed in partnership with the PA Department of Labor & Industry, PA Creative Industries, City of Philadelphia, Philaworks, Sony, Philly Youth Media Collaborative, Greater Philadelphia Film Office, Maestro Filmworks, and others.

Over the next two years, Big Picture Alliance will work with industry and community partners to develop, register, and launch new multimedia pre-apprenticeship programs that will prepare underserved youth for multimedia apprenticeships. This will enable them to train more youth, scale their multimedia producer apprenticeship program, and leverage more employment partnerships. Their pre-apprenticeship partners will include organizations from the Philly Youth Media Collaborative.

By 2029, the newly developed pre-apprenticeships and the expansion of the existing registered apprenticeship program will train and employ 36 underserved youth, provide trained talent to a dozen local companies, and produce 36 community-media projects.

Request: \$150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

4.Applicant:

Point Park University

County:

Allegheny

Proposal:

The Creative Industries Launch Lab (three-year proposal)

The Creative Industries Launch Lab is a three-year, non-credit initiative that will use the Pittsburgh Playhouse as a public creative workforce and visibility hub. The Launch Lab expands from Point Park's new Performance and Creative Industries pathway. **The Launch Lab will extend the momentum of the new academic program by offering a separate, public-facing initiative that supports non-credit residencies, creative career panels, paid project-based fellowships, public workshops, youth engagement, digital storytelling, and an annual Creative Industries Showcase.**

Through this initiative, the Pittsburgh Playhouse will become more than a performance venue. It becomes workforce infrastructure: a place where emerging creatives, alumni, professional artists, civic partners, schools, audiences, and employers can see how creative work is made, managed, marketed, taught, and sustained.

The Launch Lab will accomplish four measurable outcomes: stronger creative workforce pathways, increased public visibility of creative careers, broader youth and community access, and a documented model that can be sustained beyond the grant.

Request: \$150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

5.Applicant:

PennOhio Clay Guild, Inc.

County:

Lawrence

Proposal:

Clay Commons (three-year proposal)

In June 2026, PennOhio Clay Guild (POCG) finalized acquisition of the common-wall building adjacent to its downtown New Castle clay studio. Beginning in September 2026, this turn-key structure will house PennOhio Clay Commons, a permanent, multi-use ceramic creative center designed to serve artists, learners, visitors, and the broader public over the long term.

If approved, the Innovation & Impact grant will support the launch of this new, multi-year public initiative. The project is specifically designed to advance both visibility and innovation in Pennsylvania's creative industries while strengthening regional community and economic development. **Located at 33–39 S. Jefferson Street in the heart of New Castle, POCG will transform four interconnected street-level spaces and four upper-floor apartments into a multi-use clay arts space, bringing together a clay learning center, ceramic gallery storefront, pottery supply shoppe, visiting artist gallery,**

live/work artist lofts, and an outdoor ‘backyard’ with community kilns and clay workspaces.

The Clay Learning Center will welcome beginners, students, educators, and lifelong learners into an inclusive, cost-accessible environment for hands-on clay education and artistic expression that is distinct from POCG’s current Guild activities. Opportunities will be created for POCG members and regional artists to exhibit and sell their work in the Ceramic Gallery Storefront and Visiting Artist Gallery, strengthening artist income and visibility. The Pottery Supply Shoppe will provide essential materials locally and regionally, helping remove practical barriers that often limit artistic growth; the closest comparable retail outlets are in Pittsburgh and Cleveland, which are out of reach for many individual artists. The outdoor ‘Backyard’ will extend POCG’s collection of resources into a communal setting where kilns, demonstrations, and open clay workspaces invite collaboration and broad public participation.

The Clay Commons Initiative will advance downtown revitalization by making art visible in everyday life through active storefronts, public events, and community partnerships. This, in turn, will provide artists with space to build sustainable careers, give residents new ways to engage with the arts, and help shape a more vibrant future for New Castle and its surrounding communities.

Request: \$120,000

Recommendation: \$120,000

5.Applicant:

Pennsylvania Wilds Center For Entrepreneurship Inc

County:

McKean

Proposal:

Rural Creative Economy Acceleration Model

PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship is developing the PA Wilds Creative Works Initiative, a three-year program to connect creative entrepreneurs to Placemaker CoLab’s purpose built digital marketplace while simultaneously hiring local creative businesses to produce professional marketing content for the platform. Placemaker CoLab is a subsidiary nonprofit LLC founded by the PA Wilds Center. This digital platform offers rural creative entrepreneurs a B2B wholesale buyer portal, B2C retail storefronts, inventory management tools and regional curation, returning 93 percent gross revenue directly to local entrepreneurs.

PA Wilds Center is also the lead applicant for a \$20 million capital stack anchored by a \$10 million ARC Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE) Implementation Grant. ARC invited PA Wilds Center to apply for this Implementation Grant

following the successful completion of an ARC Planning Grant. If the ARISE Implementation Grant proposal is successful, it will fund platform development across six pilot communities in Appalachia, with the PA Wilds as the first and lead pilot region.

Innovation and Impact grant funds will be used for targeted, sector-specific resources needed to activate PA Wilds creative businesses on the platform from day one.

Over the three years, PA Wilds will recruit and onboard at least 35 creative businesses to the Placemaker CoLab platform. They will also contract with creative sector businesses to produce professional photography, videography, graphic design and copy for the platform.

Request: \$150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

ITEM 6

Recommendations for Creative Communities Initiative and Guidelines



Pennsylvania
Creative Industries

Powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

MEMO

DATE: August 14, 2026

TO: Council Members

FROM: Sarah Merritt, Senior Director of Community Development

CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director

RE: Recommendations for Creative Communities Initiative and Guidelines

MESSAGE:

About the Creative Communities Initiative

The Creative Communities Initiative (CCI) provides multi-year funding (up to \$25,000/year, for up to four years) for place-based, community-driven, arts-based projects that serve as catalysts for social cohesion, livability, and community and economic development. Commonly referred to as creative placemaking/placekeeping, CCI projects are rooted in deep community engagement and authentic inclusion of artists and culture bearers, and strong community partnerships.

Requirements of CCI Projects

- Projects must be place-based.
- Projects are managed by at least two community organizations, one of which serves as the lead applicant.
- The lead applicant organization must be a unit of government, nonprofit (501(c)3 or 501(c)6 organization.
- Projects must have the support of the community's local government via an adopted resolution and pledge of at least 10% of matching funds (in-kind or cash).
- 1:1 Match

ACTION ITEMS:

Current CCI Project Recommendations

Staff recommends approval of continued funding for the following current CCI projects:

Lead Organization	Project Location
Adams County Arts Council	Adams County
Borough of Ambridge	Ambridge, Beaver County
Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation	Brownsville, Fayette County
Butler Rotary Foundation	Butler, Butler County
Valley in Motion	Carbondale, Lackawanna County, and Forest City, Susquehanna County
3 Dots Downtown	Centre County
Dickson City Borough	Dickson City, Lackawanna County
Greater Easton Development Partnership	Easton, Northampton County
Erie Neighborhood Growth Partnership	Erie, Erie County
Visit Hershey and Harrisburg	Harrisburg, Dauphin County
Bottle Works Ethnic Art Center	Johnstown, Cambria County
Chamber of Commerce of Kane PA	Kane, McKean County
Lewisburg Downtown Partnership, Inc.	Lewisburg, Union County
City of Lock Haven	Lock Haven, Clinton County
Drexel University - Writers Room	Philadelphia, Philadelphia County
Philadelphia Mural Arts Advocates DBA Mural Arts	Philadelphia, Philadelphia County
City of Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
Riverlife	Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
National Road Heritage Corridor	Uniontown, Fayette County
Partnership for Economic Development of York County	York County

New Project Recommendations

Staff recommends the following new CCI projects for funding that will begin in FY 26-27:

Lead Organization	Project Location	Summary
Touchstone Theatre	Bethlehem, Northampton County	Addressing community challenges, such as housing insecurity, The Festival Unbound project engages residents in place-based, co-creation of public art projects and events through storytelling and performance.
ArtsQuest DBA Musikfest	Bethlehem, Northampton County	Working with Creative Factory artists the project includes community-driven public art and activities to foster community connections and elevate diverse perspectives.

Ephrata Development Organization DBA Mainspring of Ephrata	Ephrata, Lancaster County	Planning and implementation of a public art program in the community's main street corridor to include public art, artist designed wayfinding, a public art walk, and small business activities.
Historic Germantown Preserved	Germantown/Philadelphia, Philadelphia County	Focusing on community gardens, greenspaces, and historic sites, the project will feature local artists and performers leading community activities and projects to engage with the community's diverse residents.
Chinese for Affirmative Action DBA Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality	Harrisburg, Dauphin County	Strengthening mental health, cultural identity, and youth leadership for Harrisburg's growing Bhutanese-Nepali community through community story collection, storytelling, artist residencies, and community art projects.
Pop's House	Harrisburg, Dauphin County	Addressing cultural disparities, economic barriers, and accessibility, the project will elevate youth participation and activate spaces through collaborative training, and community performances and activities.
Centro De Cultura are Trabajo Y Educacion DBA CCATE	Montgomery County	Uniting Norristown's diverse population through multimedia storytelling, community journalism, and artistic expression and activities. By transforming Norristown's Main Street corridor into a vibrant cultural hub.
New Cumberland Olde Towne Foundation	New Cumberland, Dauphin County	Expanding the impact of the new Iron Bridge Music Festival to include broader community engagement and accessibility and promote downtown businesses and other assets.
Friends of the Rail Park	Philadelphia, Philadelphia County	Through deep community engagement and equitable development and anti-displacement strategies, this project incorporates public art and creative opportunities for residents along the Rail Park development corridor.
Your Agency Inc.	Philadelphia, Philadelphia County	With the newly opened Ministry of Awe site and a growing grassroots artistic community, development of co-creation opportunities and community

AGENDA

		accessibility for inclusive placemaking projects in the Old City neighborhood.
Wayne County Community Foundation	Wayne County	Addressing the challenge of rural isolation and underinvestment, the project will provide co-creation and community arts activities through a county-wide public art initiative along Route 191.

2027 Revised Creative Communities Guidelines for Council Approval

Staff recommends Council approval of the revised 2026–2027 Creative Communities Initiative application guidelines, which follow this memo.

Please note: the only change to the program is the application process. With this change, communities will no longer be required to submit a stand-alone Letter of Interest (LOI) for panel review, but will instead submit a complete application to the PCA through the Electronic Single Application (ESA) portal.

The content previously included in the LOI will now be part of the CCI application, through which applicants will demonstrate their commitment and plans for thorough community engagement, authentic inclusion of artists and culture bearers, and strong community partnerships.

INFORMATION ITEM

Staff wishes to acknowledge the successful completion of the Creative Communities Initiative grant by Barrio Alegria (Reading, Berks County) and Berwick Arts Association (Berwick, Columbia County).

Through their sustained commitment to community-driven creative placemaking, these grantees have strengthened their creative sector assets, fostered collaboration, and enhanced local cultural vitality.



Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

2027-2028 Application Guidelines Creative Communities Initiative

Application opens: September 1, 2026

Application closes: November 13, 2026, at 5 PM EST

Performance period: July 1 to June 30 each year

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About Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Pennsylvania Creative Industries is the new flagship brand of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency. With this name, the Council aims to elevate the creative sector's visibility, engage broader audiences, foster collaboration across disciplines, and underscore creativity's vital role in innovation, economic growth, and community vitality.

In 2025, our Council adopted a new strategic plan with the mission to empower, connect, and amplify creatives and creative industries and their contributions to Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and workforce. Our vision is that Pennsylvania becomes the national leader among states for creative communities, talent, and industries.

To maximize impact and align with state community and economic development goals, Pennsylvania Creative Industries invests resources in five key areas:

- Asset Development (e.g., creative organizations, entrepreneurial ecosystem, technical assistance, regional networking)
- Workforce Development (e.g., creative skills, career awareness, and employment pathways)
- Community Development (e.g., creative placemaking, engagement with local governments, and networking for practitioners)
- Visibility (e.g., promotion of creative industries, products and services, and of the contributions and opportunities within our commonwealth's creative sector)
- Policy (e.g., creation of policies that promote and foster relevancy and opportunity for creative industries, within governmental and non-governmental agencies and businesses)

Creative Industries Defined

Creative industries encompass individuals, organizations, and businesses that generate goods, services, and intellectual property through creative work. This includes advertising, architecture, performing and visual arts, design, crafts, music, media and film production, publishing, and digital games. Innovation, technology, and creative expression unite these diverse sectors.

In 2023, our commonwealth's creative industries contributed \$30B to Pennsylvania's economy and supported nearly 190K jobs. Learn more [here](#).

Purpose of the Creative Communities Initiative

The purpose of the Creative Communities program is to provide multi-year funding to community-driven, arts-based projects (creative placemaking/placekeeping) that serve as catalysts for livability, economic development, and community connectedness. Also called creative placemaking or placekeeping, the funded projects will have a demonstrated, positive impact on their respective communities.

What is creative placemaking/placekeeping?

Creative placemaking or placekeeping is a powerful community and economic development practice that integrates art, local creative sector assets, community culture and identity, and design to transform community spaces into vibrant, inclusive, accessible, and engaging places that foster community connectedness and livability.

If there is uncertainty about whether a project aligns with this Creative Communities Initiative the following questions may be a guide for reflection:

- Will the project transform or improve public space for the benefit of residents?
- Does the project foster community connectedness and belonging by engaging residents in planning and implementation?
- Are local artists, makers, and/or creative workers involved in shaping the project's vision and execution?
- Do the partner organizations have a demonstrated track record of successful collaboration and a shared vision and outcomes for the project?

Program Goals

- Strengthen communities through the arts and encourage creative expression and engagement to enhance community well-being.
- Promote and support projects that include and are accessible to all members of PA communities.
- Empower communities that have experienced underinvestment and support grassroots leaders and residents in addressing local challenges.
- Advance community revitalization and resilience and foster sustainable growth and adaptability.
- Cultivate deep community engagement and encourage active participation in community projects.
- Celebrate unique community identities that highlight what makes each community special.
- Build authentic partnerships through collaboration with local government and organizations, and artists and culture bearers.
- Invest in the creative sector through support of artists, creative small businesses, and cultural initiatives.
- Address community challenges positively by leveraging community assets to tackle pressing issues.

Eligibility & Requirements

- Project must be place-based.
- Required partnership of at least two organizations, one of which will serve as the lead applicant.
- Lead applicant must be a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation, or unit of government (counties, cities, boroughs, townships, and municipal authorities).
- Lead applicant organization must be located in the Pennsylvania community or county where the project will take place.
- Local government resolution and pledge of at least 10% of matching funds (cash or in-kind).

Please note: this funding opportunity is NOT designed to support established programs or ongoing operations and is not to be used as an annual source of funds.

Funding Amount

Generally, up to \$25,000 per year for up to four years.

- This is a reimbursement-based grant program, which means grantees must first incur and pay for eligible expenses, then submit an invoice/final report with required documentation, such as receipts, invoices, and proof of payment to receive funding.

Funding Restrictions

- Activities that occur outside the performance period.
- Activities that have a religious purpose.
- Payments to lobbyists.
- Cash prizes and awards.

- Benefit activities.
- Hospitality expenses (e.g., receptions).
- Competitions.
- Performances and exhibitions not available to the public.
- Activities for which academic credit is given.

Crediting Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Grantees must prominently acknowledge Pennsylvania Creative Industries funding in promotions, flyers, programs, media announcements, press releases, websites, social media that relate to this grant, by utilizing approved logos, branding, and materials. Pennsylvania Creative Industries will provide said materials to the grantee.

Application Process

Please note: Applicants are no longer required to submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) in order to be invited to apply to the Creative Communities Initiative. Instead, please submit a complete application to ESA.

Application Content

1. Community Context
 - Provide a brief but complete description of the community where the project will take place.
 - Highlight key demographics, creative assets (artists/culture bearers), organizations, creative businesses) and social or economic dynamics that shape the project's relevance.
2. Opportunities and Challenges
 - Clearly articulate the specific opportunities the project aims to leverage (e.g., untapped creative talent, underutilized public spaces, public safety, housing, community identity).
 - Identify the challenges the project seeks to address (e.g., social isolation, lack of public spaces, underinvestment, community connectedness).
 - Explain how these opportunities and challenges connect to the goals of your project.
3. Partnerships
 - Describe the partners involved in the project and, if known, their roles.
 - Highlight past collaborations among partners that demonstrate their ability to work together effectively.
 - Emphasize how these partnerships strengthen the project's feasibility and impact.
4. Community Engagement
 - Detail past inclusive engagement activities (e.g., events, workshops, listening sessions, surveys) that informed past or current project development.
 - Outline planned engagement strategies to ensure the project remains responsive to community needs throughout its lifecycle.
 - Explain how feedback from community members has shaped or will shape the project's vision and outcomes.
5. Role of Artists and Culture Bearers

- Describe how artists and culture bearers will be involved from planning through implementation.
- Explain their roles in shaping the project's creative direction, engaging the community, and ensuring cultural relevance.
- Highlight any innovative or experimental approaches to integrating their expertise.

Letters of Support

Three letters of support must be uploaded to the application and should be from key partners and stakeholders, such as local government, arts and culture organizations, planning or economic development agencies, the local tourism organization, education institutions, a Business Improvement District (BID), Chamber of Commerce, or other community organizations. Ensure the letters endorse the project's vision, feasibility, and potential impact while demonstrating each stakeholder's commitment to collaboration.

Application Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of experts based on the criteria below, with considerations for geography and reach. The committee will evaluate each proposal's alignment with the program goals – community engagement, authentic inclusion of artists and culture bearers, and partnerships.

Committee recommendations will be presented to the Council, Pennsylvania Creative Industries' governing body. The Council will act on these recommendations and has final authority in the awarding of grants. Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposals. Selected proposals will receive an email with next steps outlining the grant award process.

Review Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated in the following areas:

1. Community Engagement
 - Depth and inclusivity of engagement efforts: How have the partners completed successful community engagement activities in the past, and what plans are in place to continue and expand community engagement for this project moving forward?
 - Methods of engagement: Are multiple methods used (e.g., surveys, focus groups, interviews, listening sessions, workshops) to ensure broad participation?
 - Community ownership: Does the project reflect the priorities and voices of the community it aims to serve?
 - Accessibility: Are engagement activities accessible to all (e.g., language accommodations, childcare, transportation support)?
2. Authentic Inclusion of Artists and Culture Bearers
 - Role of artists and culture bearers: Are artists and culture bearers involved meaningfully in the project's planning, design, and implementation?

- Cultural relevance: Does the project center local creative assets, culture and/or traditions, or heritage in its approach?
- Compensation and support: Are artists and culture bearers fairly compensated for their time and contributions?

3. Partnerships

- Strength and diversity of partnerships: Does the project involve multiple partners (e.g., local government, nonprofits, businesses, community groups) working collaboratively?
- Past collaborations: Have partners worked together successfully in the past? Are there examples of shared goals and outcomes?
- Shared vision: Do partners have a unified vision for the project, and is this vision clearly articulated?
- Leverage of resources: Do partnerships bring additional resources (e.g., funding, in-kind support, expertise) to the project?

Questions?

- For questions, concerns, and issues with Keystone Login call: (877) 328-0995.
- For technical and login questions, contact the Enterprise eGrants Customer Service Center: (833) 448-0647 or egrantshelp@pa.gov.
- For questions about grant application content and required attachments, contact Sarah Merritt, Senior Director of Community Development: skmerritt@pa.gov or (717) 787-1521

Appeals Process

The Council recognizes that errors may occur in the application process. The Council is committed to acknowledging any errors and responding to rectify the effects of an error. The appeals process enables applicants to identify these errors and omissions and bring them to the attention of the Council. Appeals may result in a change in the determination of eligibility or the award amount if the applicant can satisfactorily document that an error or omission occurred through no fault of the applicant. Appeals are awarded only if the error or omission had a substantial effect on the evaluation of an application or on the determination of an applicant's eligibility.

Appeals are not intended to provide the applicant with an opportunity to challenge the qualitative assessment of the application. Missing the published application due date or failure to submit required information or documentation are not grounds for appeal.

Applicants considering an appeal should contact the applicable [program director](#) for advice and guidance. The appeal must be made in writing (hardcopy letter) to the Council's [Chief of Staff](#) within ten business days of the date of the notification of the award status from the Council. Appeal letters should identify the error or omission and the effect such error had on the Council's application review process. If the appeal is supported, funds will be awarded only if they are available.

Grants under this program are processed under the authority of the act of January 25, 1966 (P.L. 1542 (1965), 71 P.S. Section 1530.1 et seq., as amended, and 58 Pa. Code §301.32.

DRAFT

ITEM 7

Recommendations for PA Creative Asset Program



MEMO

DATE: August 14, 2026

TO: Council Members

FROM: Ian Rosario, Senior Director of Asset Development

CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director

RE: Recommendations for Creative Asset Program

MESSAGE:

In October 2025, Council approved creation of the Creative Asset Program as the successor to Entry Track and Arts Organizations and Arts Programs (AOAP), making it the new general operating support program for small to mid-sized organizations. Eligible applicants receive funding to support their creative services, products, and programs.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be a small-to-mid sized organization, defined as having a two-year average revenue between \$100,000 and \$2,000,000, as reported on IRS Form 990 or 990 EZ.
- Be a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation whose mission is to create, perform, present, promote, or serve the creative (arts) sector.
- Be located in Pennsylvania and registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations.

Recommendation

Staff recommends Council approve 188 eligible applications at \$15,000 per organization. A list of the recommended applicant organizations follows.

APPLICANT	County	Award Amount
1812 Productions Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Ab Childrens Theatre A&B Childrens Theatre	Northumberland	\$15,000
Act li Playhouse Ltd	Montgomery	\$15,000
Allegheny River Stone Center For The Arts	Clarion	\$15,000
Allens Lane Art Center Association	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Altoona Symphony Society Inc DbA Altoona Symphony Orchestra	Blair	\$15,000
Ambler Theater Inc	Montgomery	\$15,000
Ars Nova Workshop Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Art Assn Of Harrisburg	Dauphin	\$15,000
Art Creates Us Inc DbA Project Art	Allegheny	\$15,000
Artistas Y Musicos Latino Americanos DbA Amla	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Artists Image Resource Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Arts And Education At The Hoyt	Lawrence	\$15,000
Arts Council Of Erie DbA Erie Arts & Culture	Erie	\$15,000
Artsmart	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Artwell Collaborative Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Assemble Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Associated Artists Of Pittsburgh	Allegheny	\$15,000
Association For Public Art	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Association For The Colonial Theatre	Chester	\$15,000
Attack Theatre Incorporated	Allegheny	\$15,000
Balafon West African Dance Ensemble Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Ballet Guild of the Lehigh Valley Inc.	Northampton	\$15,000
Barebones Productions Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Berks Arts Council	Berks	\$15,000
Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble Inc	Columbia	\$15,000
Bowerbird	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Bradford Creat & Perf Ac	McKean	\$15,000
Brew House Arts	Allegheny	\$15,000
Broad Street Review	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Bucks County Choral Society	Bucks	\$15,000
Bucks County Symphony Society	Bucks	\$15,000
Butler County Symphony Association	Butler	\$15,000
Capitol Theatre Center Foundation	Franklin	\$15,000
Carlisle Arts Learning Center	Cumberland	\$15,000
Center For Metal Arts Inc DbA Center For Metal Arts	Cambria	\$15,000
Central Pennsylvania Festival Of The Arts Inc	Centre	\$15,000
Centro Nueva Creacion	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Chamber Music Pittsburgh	Allegheny	\$15,000
Cheltenham Center For The Arts	Montgomery	\$15,000

City Of Asylum Pittsburgh	Allegheny	\$15,000
Civic Theatre Of Allentown Pa	Lehigh	\$15,000
Community Arts Center Of Cambria Co	Cambria	\$15,000
Community Arts Center Wallingford	Delaware	\$15,000
Community Music School	Lehigh	\$15,000
Community Music School Of Collegeville	Montgomery	\$15,000
Community Youth Orchestra of Bucks Co Youth Orchestra Of Bucks County	Bucks	\$15,000
Cosacosa Art At Large Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
County Theater Inc	Bucks	\$15,000
Craftnow Philadelphia	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Cresson Lake Playhouse	Cambria	\$15,000
Cultural Alliance Of York County Inc	York	\$15,000
Cultureworks Greater Philadelphia	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Curio Theatre Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Dafmark Dance Theatre	Erie	\$15,000
Dance Fusion Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Dance Iquail Inc DbA Dance Iquail	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Dance It Forward DbA Greater York Dance	York	\$15,000
Darlington Fine Arts Center	Delaware	\$15,000
Dreamwrights Youth & Family Theatre	York	\$15,000
Eichelberger Performing Arts Center	York	\$15,000
Electronic Music Education And Preservation Project DbA Emeapp	Montgomery	\$15,000
Elk County Council On The Arts	Elk	\$15,000
Emmaus Creative Arts & Innovation Center DbA Juxtahub	Lehigh	\$15,000
Enchantment Theatre Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Erie Art Museum	Erie	\$15,000
Expressive Path Inc	Montgomery	\$15,000
Film Pittsburgh	Allegheny	\$15,000
Gamut Theatre Group	Dauphin	\$15,000
Geyer Performing Arts Center	Westmoreland	\$15,000
Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council	Allegheny	\$15,000
Greater Pittsburgh Office Of Promotion DbA Pittsburgh Film Office	Allegheny	\$15,000
Greater Uniontown Heritage Cnsrtm State Theatre Center For The Arts	Fayette	\$15,000
Gretna Productions Inc DbA Gretna Theatre	Lebanon	\$15,000
Hamilton-Gibson Productions	Tioga	\$15,000
Harrisburg Community Theatre DbA Theatre Harrisburg	Dauphin	\$15,000
Hedgerow Theatre	Delaware	\$15,000
Hiway Theatre Inc	Montgomery	\$15,000
Indigenous Peoples Day Philly Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Inis Nua Theatre Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Inliquid Com Incorporated	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Interact Inc DbA Interact Theatre Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000

Intercultural Journeys Inc Db a Intercultural Journeys	Philadelphia	\$15,000
International Poetry Forum	Allegheny	\$15,000
Jeanne Ruddy & Dancers Inc The Performance Garage	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Kelly Music for Life	Delaware	\$15,000
Kennett Flash Inc	Chester	\$15,000
Kids Are Kids Db a Acting Without Boundaries	Delaware	\$15,000
Koresh Dance Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Lancaster Symphony Orchestra	Lancaster	\$15,000
Lansdowne Economic Development Corp	Delaware	\$15,000
Latrobe Art Center	Westmoreland	\$15,000
Lenape Chamber Ensemble	Bucks	\$15,000
Liberty Bell Pops Db a Philly Pops	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Long's Park Amphitheater Foundation	Lancaster	\$15,000
Main Line Art Center	Delaware	\$15,000
Main Street Theatre Company	Fayette	\$15,000
Market Square Concerts	Dauphin	\$15,000
Media Arts Council	Delaware	\$15,000
Mendelssohn Choir Of Pittsburgh	Allegheny	\$15,000
Metropolitan Ballet Company	Montgomery	\$15,000
Mexican Cultural Center	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Millbrook Playhouse	Clinton	\$15,000
Musicopia	Philadelphia	\$15,000
National Liberty Museum	Philadelphia	\$15,000
New Hazlett Center For The Performing Arts Db a New Hazlett Theater	Allegheny	\$15,000
New Holland Band Inc	Lancaster	\$15,000
Nittany Valley Symphony Inc	Centre	\$15,000
Office For Public Art Db a Shiftworks Community And Public Arts	Allegheny	\$15,000
Open Stage Of Harrisburg	Dauphin	\$15,000
Orchestra 2001 Inc Orchestra 2001	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Pennsylvania Guild Of Craftsmen	Lancaster	\$15,000
Pennsylvania Public Radio Assn Db a Echoes	Chester	\$15,000
Perry County Council Of The Arts	Perry	\$15,000
Phila Clef Club Of The Performing Arts Phil Clef Club Of Jazz & Performing Arts	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philadelphia Dance Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philadelphia Folklore Project	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philadelphia Scenic Works	Delaware	\$15,000
Philadelphia Sinfonia Assoc Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philadelphia Young Playwrights	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philadelphia Youth Choral Ensembles	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Philharmonic Society Of Northeastern Pa	Luzerne	\$15,000
Photography Without Borders	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Piffaro The Renaissance Band	Philadelphia	\$15,000

Pig Iron Theatre Company	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Pittsburgh Arts And Lectures	Allegheny	\$15,000
Pittsburgh Center For Creative Reuse	Allegheny	\$15,000
Pittsburgh Filmmakers DbA Pittsburgh Center For Arts & Media	Allegheny	\$15,000
Pittsburgh Opera Theater Inc DbA Pittsburgh Festival Opera	Allegheny	\$15,000
Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company	Allegheny	\$15,000
Playpenn Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Pocono Mountains Music Festival	Monroe	\$15,000
Prima Arts Inc	Lancaster	\$15,000
Prism Quartet Incorporated	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Quantum Theatre Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Radiant Hall Studios	Allegheny	\$15,000
RAIR, INC.	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Reading Musical Foundation	Berks	\$15,000
Resonance Works	Allegheny	\$15,000
River City Brass Band DbA River City Brass	Allegheny	\$15,000
Rock To The Future Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Scribe Video Center	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Servant Stage Company	Lancaster	\$15,000
Silver Eye Center For Photography	Allegheny	\$15,000
Slb Radio Productions Inc	Allegheny	\$15,000
Society To Preserve The Millvale Murals Of Maxo Vanka Spmmmv	Allegheny	\$15,000
South Asian American Digital Archive Nfp DbA Saada	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Southeastern Pennsylvania Symphony Orchestra	Montgomery	\$15,000
State Theatre Inc	Centre	\$15,000
Studio Incamminati	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Susquehanna Art Museum	Dauphin	\$15,000
Susquehanna Valley Chorale	Union	\$15,000
Sweetwater Center For The Arts	Allegheny	\$15,000
Tempesta Di Mare Inc	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Texture Contemporary Ballet	Allegheny	\$15,000
The Big Picture Alliance	Philadelphia	\$15,000
The Center For Emerging Visual Artists Ltd	Philadelphia	\$15,000
The Crossing	Philadelphia	\$15,000
The Genesis Collective	Beaver	\$15,000
The Hershey Symphony Orchestra Society	Dauphin	\$15,000
The Print Center	Philadelphia	\$15,000
The Union Project	Allegheny	\$15,000
Theatre Exile Company DbA Theatre Exile	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Theatre Horizon	Montgomery	\$15,000
Thomas Struthers Trust Struthers Library Theatre	Warren	\$15,000
Three Aksha	Philadelphia	\$15,000

Tilt Institute	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Tiny Wpa	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Totem Pole Playhouse	Franklin	\$15,000
Touchstone Center For Crafts	Fayette	\$15,000
Touchstone Theatre	Northampton	\$15,000
Twelve Gates Arts	Philadelphia	\$15,000
University City Arts League	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Upper Darby Arts And Education Foundation	Delaware	\$15,000
Uptown Music Collective	Lycoming	\$15,000
Village Theater Company DBA The Lindsay Theater and Cultural Center	Allegheny	\$15,000
Waldos And Company	Adams	\$15,000
Walk In Art Center	Schuylkill	\$15,000
West Chester Dance Works West Chester Dance Works	Chester	\$15,000
Westmoreland Arts And Heritage Festival Inc	Westmoreland	\$15,000
Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra	Westmoreland	\$15,000
Wharton Esherick Museum	Chester	\$15,000
Williamsport Symphony Orchestra	Lycoming	\$15,000
World Poetry Inc Dba American Poetry Review	Philadelphia	\$15,000
Wyoming County Cultural Center Dba Dietrich Theater	Wyoming	\$15,000
Yes And Collaborative Arts	Philadelphia	\$15,000
York Symphony Association York Symphony Orchestra	York	\$15,000

ITEM 8

**Recommendation for Statewide Services - Request for Proposals for the
Selection of Creative Business Loan Fund Administrator**



MEMO

DATE: August 14, 2026
TO: Council Members
FROM: Amanda Lovell, Senior Director, Workforce and Business Development
CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director
RE: Recommendation for Statewide Services – Request for Proposals for the Selection of Creative Business Loan Fund Administrator

MESSAGE:

Staff recommends approval to publish a Statewide Services – Request for Proposals (RFP) to contract additional regional program administrators for the Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF). The addition of program administrators in specific geographic regions will ensure much broader availability of the CBLF, which is currently available in the western half of the Commonwealth, and the Lehigh Valley.

In line with current administration of the CBLF, staff recommends Council seek proposals from Pennsylvania-based Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to administer the Fund for a period of five years.

Staff recommends focusing on the following counties for CBLF expansion:

1. Southeastern Pennsylvania, including but not limited to the following counties: Adams, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and Perry.
2. Northeastern Pennsylvania, including but not limited to the following counties: Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, and Wyoming.

The addition of CBLF program administrators for the aforementioned counties, coupled with the existing availability of the program, will ensure the CBLF is an accessible creative sector financial tool for 62 of the Commonwealth's 67 counties.

Proposals will be due on October 30, 2026, with staff providing recommendations at the following Council meeting.

Background on the Creative Business Loan Fund

Launched in 2020, the Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF) offers affordable, flexible financing to small creative businesses across the Commonwealth. The CBLF prioritizes businesses located in underserved areas, including small towns and rural communities. Eligible uses include working capital, equipment purchases, renovations to retail, production, or office space, and—on a limited basis—building acquisitions. Loan amounts range from a few thousand dollars up to \$250,000.

The Council's investment in the CBLF (budgeted for \$250,000 for Fiscal Year 2026-27) represents a small portion of the total Fund sum of \$8.4M in closed loans, but enables the agency to leverage private capital on behalf of the creative sector.

The CBLF is currently administered by two Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs): Bridgeway Capital and Rising Tide Community Loan Fund. Each is responsible for deploying loan capital and providing technical assistance to small businesses in their respective regions (Bridgeway covers the western half of Pennsylvania and Rising Tide covers the Lehigh Valley and a portion of Northeastern Pennsylvania).

What is a CDFI?

Community development financial institution (CDFI) is a designation given by the U.S. Department of the Treasury to mission-driven financial institutions that serve low-income communities and people with limited access to financing.

What is a creative small business?

Creative small businesses are locally rooted enterprises with fewer than twenty-five employees that produce cultural, artistic, or design-based goods and services. They include, but are not limited to, craft manufacturers, arts schools, architecture firms, design and fabrication studios, media companies, and visual, literary and performing arts production agencies.

CDFIs define small businesses not just by size—typically fewer than 500 employees—but by their role in strengthening communities. Creative small businesses often operate in underserved areas, are independently owned, and face barriers to traditional financing. They contribute to local identity, economic vitality, and inclusive growth, making them a priority for CDFI investment and support.

CBLF Statistics (As of November 3, 2025)

- Average Loan Amount = \$169,000
- Total of Loans Closed = \$8.4M
- 25% of loans used for real estate acquisition
- Breakdown of loan uses
 - Real Estate = 13

- Working Capital = 24
- Equipment = 6
- Property Renovation and Building Inventory = 4
- Marketing = 3
- Access to Markets = 1

The proposed RFP for additional CBLF program administrators follows this page.



Pennsylvania
Creative Industries
Powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

Guidelines for Statewide Services - Request for Proposals (RFP) for Creative Business Loan Fund Regional Program Administrators

Application due date: October 30, 2026

Activity period: January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2032

About Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Pennsylvania Creative Industries is the new flagship brand of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA), a state agency. With this name, the Council aims to elevate the creative sector's visibility, engage broader audiences, foster collaboration across disciplines, and underscore creativity's vital role in innovation, economic growth, and community vitality.

In 2025, our Council adopted a new strategic plan with the **mission** to empower, connect, and amplify creatives and creative industries and their contributions to Pennsylvania's communities, economy, and workforce. Our **vision** is that Pennsylvania becomes the national leader among states for creative communities, talent, and industries.

To maximize impact and align with state community and economic development goals, Pennsylvania Creative Industries invests resources in five key areas:

- Asset Development (e.g., creative organizations, entrepreneurial ecosystem, technical assistance, regional networking).
- Workforce Development (e.g., creative skills, career awareness, and employment pathways).
- Community Development (e.g., creative placemaking, engagement with local governments, and networking for practitioners).
- Visibility (e.g., promotion of creative industries, products and services, and of the contributions and opportunities within our commonwealth's creative sector).
- Policy (e.g., creation of policies that promote and foster relevancy and opportunity for creative industries, within governmental and non-governmental agencies and businesses)

Creative Industries Defined

The creative industries encompass individuals, organizations, and businesses that generate goods, services, and intellectual property through creative work. This includes advertising, architecture, performing and visual arts, design, crafts, music, media and film production, publishing, and digital games. Innovation, technology, and creative expression unite these diverse sectors. In 2023, our commonwealth's creative industries contributed \$30B to Pennsylvania's economy and supported nearly 190K jobs. Learn more at [Council on the Arts | Commonwealth of Pennsylvania](#)

About the Statewide Services – Request for Proposals for Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF) Regional Program Administrators

Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) seeks to expand the availability of its existing [Creative Business Loan Fund \(CBLF\)](#). The PCA anticipates selecting up to two regional program administrators (Administrators).

These Administrators will be responsible for providing CBLF loan servicing in the following regions (Note: RFP respondents are not required to provide CBLF service in all of the below counties, but must specify which counties they propose serving as an Administrator for, in their response):

1. Southeastern Pennsylvania, including but not limited to the following counties: Adams, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and Perry.
2. Northeastern Pennsylvania, including but not limited to the following counties: Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, and Wyoming.

Selected Administrators will be expected to maintain Administrator status for a five-year period, unless the organization fails to comply with the guidelines and terms and conditions of the grant award agreement.

At the end of the five-year period the Administrator may re-apply to continue administration of the Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF). Although the Administrator status is for a five-year period, the Commonwealth will distribute an annual contract to the Administrator, which includes administrative funding for the fiscal year, which is contingent on passage of the Commonwealth budget and related agency appropriations.

Award Amount

The PCA anticipates approving up to two awards through this RFP process and that individual award amounts will not exceed \$250,000. Awards will be distributed in one sum, at the beginning of the five-year grant period, and must be matched in cash at least 4:1 over the five-year period of the award agreement.

Grant Breakdown: The aggregate award amount shall be used by the Grantee to support administrative project costs.

Description of Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF)

The Creative Business Loan Fund supports affordable, flexible financing to small, creative businesses across the commonwealth. Inspiration for creation of this fund stemmed from the awareness of a growing need for financial support for creative small businesses, which are important drivers of employment and economic vibrancy.

The program encourages the participation of interested creative businesses located in communities across the commonwealth, including those located in low-income communities, urban, suburban, and rural communities. Eligible uses include working capital, equipment purchases, renovations to retail, production, or office space, and—on a limited basis—building acquisitions. Loan amounts range from a few thousand dollars up to \$250,000.

Administrator Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be Pennsylvania-based, nonprofit Community Development Financial Institutions as defined by U.S. Department of Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

Administrator Requirements

- Demonstrated financial and staff capacity to effectively administer program requirements.
- An interest in, and preferably knowledge of, working with small businesses in all or some of the following creative industry areas:
 - Marketing – Advertising and marketing agencies & professionals
 - Architecture – Architecture firms & architects
 - Visual Arts & Crafts – Galleries, artists, artisans & makers, tattoo artists
 - Design – Product, interior, graphic, and fashion design firms and designers
 - Film & Media – Film, video, animation, TV & Radio businesses
 - Digital Games – Companies, programmers & individuals producing games.
 - Music & Entertainment –Producers, venues, musicians & performers
 - Publishing – Print or electronic businesses & content creators, editors & writers
- Work collaboratively on program development and implementation with the Pennsylvania Creative Industries staff.
- Grantee shall provide to each creative business that receives a loan technical assistance and counselling services that are designed to contribute to the success of the creative business and its ability to repay the loan. These services may include but are not limited to such areas as marketing surveys, financial accounting reporting, legal assistance, billing and marketing.
- Develop and actively distribute notice of, and applications for the CBLF Program
- Collect and provide data to the Pennsylvania Creative Industries staff on a regular basis.

Crediting of Pennsylvania Creative Industries

Selected Creative Business Loan Fund (CBLF) regional program administrators must prominently acknowledge funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, in promotions, flyers, programs, media announcements, press releases, websites, social media, etc. by utilizing approved logos, branding, and materials.

Proposal Narrative, Submission, and Review Criteria and Process

Proposal narrative (not to exceed 4 pages):

1. Describe your organization, including mission, vision, and goals, and how your organization is aligned with Pennsylvania Creative Industries' Mission and Vision as outlined on page one of this document.
2. Describe how your CDFI will promote and prioritize creative businesses
3. Describe your CDFI's relevant experience with comparable programs, demonstrated outcomes, applicable credentials, and financial planning and oversight practices.
4. Describe your CDFI's capacity to carry out the proposed program, including plan to reach regional coverage.

Required attachments:

1. Proposed program budget up to \$250,000 amount over a 5-year period.
2. Most recently completed audited financial statements.

Submission process: *(Please note: all questions regarding the application process should be directed to Amanda Lovell at alovell@pa.gov or (717) 585.7987)*

1. Read this document thoroughly.
2. Before applying, contact Amanda Lovell preferably at alovell@pa.gov or (717) 585.7987.
3. Submit your proposal to Amanda Lovell at alovell@pa.gov by October 30, 2026.

Proposal Review Process

Review Criteria:

- Alignment with approach: Applicant demonstrates alignment with Pennsylvania Creative Industries' Mission and Vision as well as the requirements outlined in the guidelines in the proposal as it relates to approach, implementation plan, and program budget;
- Impact and reach: Applicant demonstrates impact and regional reach of the proposed program;
- Experience with comparable projects: Applicant demonstrates a successful history of developing and executing comparable programs and/or activities; and
- Capacity: Applicant demonstrates organizational and key staff capacity to carry out the proposed program.

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee based on the review criteria included in this document. Committee recommendations will be presented to PCA's Council, Pennsylvania Creative Industries' governing body. Council will act on recommendations and has final authority in the awarding of grants. Applicants will be notified about the status of their proposal. Selected proposals will be notified (via email) with next steps outlining the award process.

ITEM 9

Proposed Updates to the Eligibility for Creative Entrepreneur
Accelerator Program



MEMO

DATE: August 14, 2026
TO: Council Members
FROM: Amanda Lovell, Senior Director, Workforce and Business Development
CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director
RE: Proposed Updates to the Eligibility for Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator Program, Beginning September 1, 2026, and Information about the Program Guidelines

MESSAGE:

Staff recommends approval of the below updates to the applicant eligibility requirements for the Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator (CEA) program. Proposed eligibility requirements, if approved, would go into effect with the launch of the September 2026 CEA grant cycle.

(Note: additional CEA participant eligibility requirements exist, but were previously approved by Council and have been in use.)

These updates are reflective of and in alignment with the evolved, intended outcomes of the CEA program.

Updates are detailed below:

Applicant Eligibility
Applicants must:

- Be able to provide tax documentation verifying that you have been in business and operating in Pennsylvania for at least one year.
- Creative businesses awarded the Impact Grant will not be eligible for the Impact Grant for three years and/or grant cycles after being selected. They may apply for the Growth Grant in the following year and/or grant cycle.

In addition, to the above information regarding eligibility, we have included the updated CEA program description, below, for information purposes only.

About the Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator (CEA) Program

Creative businesses are invaluable contributors to the commercial and cultural vitality of Pennsylvania communities. They drive innovation, deliver products and services, generate economic opportunities, and enhance community identity.

Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA) offers the Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator (CEA) program to creative entrepreneurs who aspire to grow their for-profit creative businesses in ways that positively impact their communities. The program encourages participation from creative entrepreneurs across the Commonwealth, including those located in low-income, urban, suburban, and rural communities.

Bridgeway Capital works in collaboration with Pennsylvania Creative Industries as the statewide administrator of the CEA program.

Grant Awards

Approved CEA applicants will receive either a Growth Grant or an Impact Grant, as well as a corresponding level of business assistance support during the grant activity period.

- The Growth Grant (up to \$4,000) is for emerging to established creative businesses to pursue opportunities that support market expansion and/or financial resilience.
- The Impact Grant (up to \$17,000) is for established creative businesses to invest in activities that positively impact their communities, while supporting business growth and long-term sustainability.

Selection Process

Grant funding for the CEA program is limited in each grant cycle and therefore can be competitive. A select group of panelists throughout the state will review all applications. If an applicant is not selected for the program, it should not be interpreted as an indicator of business value or legitimacy; individuals are encouraged to apply again in the next available grant cycle.

ITEM 10

Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Grants Budget



MEMO

DATE: August 4, 2026
TO: Council Members
FROM: Amy Gabriele, Chief Financial Officer
CC: Karl Blischke, Executive Director
RE: Grants Budget

MESSAGE:

ACTION ITEM: 2026-2027 GRANTS BUDGET:

The following page details the agency's 2026-2027 grants budget proposal. Many of the budget line items relate to programs and recommendations addressed and acted on in other sections of this Council book.

The budget includes a \$10,590,000 state appropriation for the agency's grants budget, which was enacted in July.

A balance of approximately \$555,000 remains from the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 grants budget. This has been approved by the Governor's Budget Office to use in 2026-2027.

The awarding of all grants is subject to applicants entering into grant award agreements with the agency and compliance with the state's terms and conditions, the state's Contractor Responsibility Program, and certain required representations and warranties made by awardees.

Pennsylvania Creative Industries Grants Budgets 2026-2027 GRANTS BUDGET RECOMMENDATION		DESCRIPTION
REVENUE		
State	\$10,590,000	
Federal - NEA	\$365,626	
Waiver Balances	\$555,748.60	
Revenue TOTAL	\$11,511,375	
EXPENSES		
Asset Development		
Asset Program	\$2,820,000	Supports \$100K-\$2mil arts organizations that deliver services, products, and/or programs.
Spotlight Program	\$1,000,000	Supports \$10K-less than \$100K arts organizations and programs that deliver services, products, and/or programs.
Capitalization	\$100,000	Supports financially healthy organizations that have a proven and marketable artistic product and/or service and are committed and poised to utilize contributed capital to scale up operations towards progressive growth.
Pathways	\$1,100,000	Supports multi-year, tiered technical assistance and organizational development services for arts and cultural organizations rooted in and serving historically underserved communities, to strengthen organizational capacity, community engagement, artist development, and long-term sustainability.
Catalyst	\$650,000	Supports new initiatives and opportunities that advance strategies for empowering, connecting and amplifying creatives and creative industries and their contributions to communities, economy and workforce and have the potential for statewide or broad regional impact on the creative sector.
Industries Investment Fund	\$600,000	Support for the development of a public/private partnership fund for early stage, Pennsylvania-based, creative
Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation	\$80,000	Supports Pennsylvania access to programs and resources including grants, services, and technical assistance available only to Mid Atlantic's nine partner states and jurisdictions.
TOTAL	\$6,350,000	
Workforce Development		
Business Loan Fund	\$500,000	Provides affordable and flexible financing to small creative businesses.
Entrepreneur Accelerator	\$1,000,000	Supports creative entrepreneurs through small business consultation services, grant funding, and access to a curriculum of business strategies delivered through a cohort model of networking, learning, and participation.
Workforce & Career Education	\$500,000	Supports training and skill development programs, career pathway programs and youth workforce development initiatives.
TOTAL	\$2,000,000	
Community Development		
Creative Communities	\$875,000	Provides multi-year funding to community-driven, arts-based projects that serve as catalysts for livability, economic development, and community connectedness.
Creative Districts	\$0	Supports communities in transforming walkable, culturally vibrant areas into centers of economic growth, local identity, and inclusive revitalization by investing in creative assets, fostering entrepreneurship and small business development.
TOTAL	\$875,000	
Visibility		
Platform Connection	\$300,000	Supports PCI efforts to strengthen and grow the creative ecosystem in North Central and North East PA.
Innovation & Impact	\$1,320,000	their contributions to communities, the economy, and the workforce while advancing innovation and increasing the sector's visibility.
Poetry Out Loud	\$75,000	Supports the statewide administration of POL which is a national arts education program that encourages the study of poetry by offering free educational materials and a recitation competition for high school aged students across the country through classroom, regional and state competitions.
TOTAL	\$1,695,000	
Policy		
Statewide Service/Research/Accessibility	\$525,000	Supports research and related activities to inform future strategies, programs, and decision-making on the creative
TOTAL	\$525,000	
Expenses TOTAL	\$11,445,000	
BALANCE	\$66,374.60	