



GUIDELINES

Winter 2025/2026 Grant Cycle

The Vallejo Arts Fund (VAF) provides grants to Vallejo-rooted artists, cultural bearers, cultural producers, collectives, and organizations, from a broad range of life experiences and perspectives, that support arts and cultural practices and work in Vallejo, CA. VAF will distribute \$1,000,000 over the next two years, from 2025 - 2027, to support arts and culture in Vallejo, which is a start to addressing structural inequities that have impacted historically excluded artists, culture bearers, arts organizers, and their communities. The Fund seeks to support artistic and cultural work within the performing arts, visual arts, digital and media arts, traditional folk arts, and oral/written storytelling.

VAF is led by priorities from Vallejoans, facilitated by [Great Leap](#) and [Calling up Justice](#), administered by the [Center for Cultural Innovation](#), and supported by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The VAF Winter/Spring 2026 Grant Cycle will award grants in the following categories: Youth Arts Programs, Cultural Communities, Places and Spaces, Microgrants, and Capacity Building. A total of \$780,000 will be made available in this funding round.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VAF respects and values Vallejo artists and cultural bearers. The Fund is grounded in the voices of Vallejo's diverse communities and their lived experiences as artists, culture bearers, and arts organizers. Many have shared the impacts of gentrification, exclusionary and racist practices, and the historical lack of support for culturally rooted arts and traditions in the city. Therefore, VAF values diversity, inclusion, and equity around race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, ability, socio-economic status, artistic genre, experience, and regional lived experiences. Just as important is VAF's approach - we enter this opportunity with humility, centering respect for all, an environment of mutual learning, collective and deep relational practices, transparency, and action-based care. VAF recognizes that any new effort takes patience, time, and care.

Additionally, VAF encourages Vallejo-based artists, cultural bearers, cultural workers, arts administrators, creative producers, cultural practitioners, and technicians whose work is grounded in Vallejo's diverse communities and have demonstrated impact on the broader Vallejo community, particularly benefiting those communities that have been impacted by gentrification, exclusionary and racist practices, historical lack of support or investment for culturally rooted arts and traditions, and those who have remained under the radar or

under-resourced in their specific arts discipline to apply for funding.

CATEGORIES AND ELIGIBILITY

YOUTH ARTS PROGRAMS

This grant aims to support existing programs and/or expand arts and cultural opportunities for Vallejo youth in their neighborhoods, including those that have been impacted by gentrification, exclusionary and racist practices, and a historical lack of support or investment in culturally rooted arts and traditions. The Youth Arts Programs grants will be awarded to individuals, collectives, or organizations with programs that engage youth (defined as individuals 20 years or younger) in creating, exploring, exhibiting, or cultivating work in the performing arts, visual arts, digital/media arts, traditional folk arts, or storytelling. Up to eight awards ranging between \$10,000 - \$20,000, with funding terms of either one or two years.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be individual artists, arts workers (e.g., staff at an arts and cultural organization), or staff at a youth-serving organization with a track record of providing arts and cultural programming in Vallejo within the past 3 years.
- Applicants (individuals, collective, or organizations) must be able to demonstrate residency, engagement, and/or having worked within Vallejo, CA over the past three (3) years.
- Applicants must reside full-time in California.

The following are ineligible for funding consideration:

- Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, for-profits, fiscally sponsored organizations) requesting funding to support their general operations;
- Individuals or organizations that have not resided, engaged, and/or worked within the city of Vallejo for at least 3 years;
- Individuals/Organizations who are requesting funding to support a non-youth or non-arts/cultural organization;
- Incomplete applications or applications with inaccessible (e.g., password-protected, broken links) attachments; and
- Individuals who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation, Great Leap, Inc., or Calling Up Justice.

Examples of Eligible Grant Proposals Include:

- Workshops and/or Classes in community-based spaces where youth learn, practice, and explore new skills and/or artistic practices. These can be ongoing or new programs.

- Support for individual artists and/or organizations who are already working within School-Based Arts Education programs in Vallejo.
- Programs that use art and culture to engage with youth who have been impacted by the Juvenile Justice System in Vallejo.
- Programs that connect youth to elders, or nature, and/or technology through art-making and/or self-expression in Vallejo.

MICROGRANTS

The Vallejo Arts Fund Microgrants aim to increase investment in individual artists in two specific ways: providing unrestricted support for mid-career and established artists, and providing support for individual artists or arts collectives to produce events or complete short-term projects.

Individual Artist Microgrant (Unrestricted): Up to twenty \$3,000 awards are available for mid-career or established artists and/or cultural bearers whose body of artistic work, practice, and rootedness in Vallejo provides benefit to the broader community.

Individual Artist or Artist Collective Microgrant (Program-Restricted): Up to twenty \$2,000 awards are available for artists/cultural bearers and/or artist/cultural collectives at all career stages who have been rooted in, working with, or engaging the broader Vallejo community and are seeking funding to support the completion of one artistic or cultural project. Expenses for this project-restricted grant can be spent on artist, producer, and/or venue fees; marketing or publicity; documentation, editing, and archiving; and hospitality for artists or community members, as well as production expenses (i.e., costumes, supplies, or printing).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This grant seeks to provide recognition and support to up to forty (40) individual artists or cultural workers rooted in Vallejo, CA.

All Applicants:

- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Must reside full-time in California
- Must be able to demonstrate residency, engagement, and/or having worked within Vallejo, CA over the past three (3) years
- Must be able to demonstrate a sustained history of public engagement with their work in the past three (3) years

Individual Artist Microgrant (Unrestricted) Applicants ONLY:

Applicants must be at a mid-career or established stage in their individual artistic or cultural practice.

Individual Artist or Artistic Collective Microgrant (Program-Restricted) Applicants ONLY:

- Eligible expenses include fees associated with marketing, publicity, documentation, editing, or archiving; artist, producer, and/or venue fees; and production expenses (i.e., costumes, supplies, or printing).
- The proposed event and/or activity must take place within the City of Vallejo.

The following are ineligible for funding consideration:

- Early-career artists (for individual artists microgrant applicants);
- Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, for-profits, fiscally sponsored organizations);
- Individuals who have not resided, engaged, and/or worked within the city of Vallejo for at least 3 years;
- Incomplete applications or applications with inaccessible (e.g., password-protected, broken links) attachments; and
- Individuals who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation, Great Leap, Inc. or Calling Up Justice.

Examples of Eligible Grant Expenses for Project-Restricted Microgrants Include:

- Contemporary Arts and Cultural Exhibitions, Productions, Concerts, Festivals, Workshops, or Public Sharings by an individual artist or an artist collective produced within Vallejo, CA, including but not limited to:
 - Publishing costs (i.e., including printing, editing, graphic design, etc) for new works by poets or written storytellers..
 - Rehearsal space, technician, or designer fees for a performing arts event
 - Additional rental fee for studio time in advance of an exhibition opening
 - Honorariums for applicant artists for their work on a specific work being produced or presented
 - Honorarium for guest artists to participate in a Vallejo-based event (Vallejo-rooted guest artists are considered more competitive)
 - Post-production work on digital media projects, including editing, graphic design, etc.
 - Production or hospitality expenses for projects that bridge neighborhoods, generations, or cultural communities, fostering shared learning and collaboration.

Note: Given the breadth of possible costs associated with Microgrants, we encourage potential applicants to contact CCI at grants@cciarts.org to schedule a time to discuss your specific situation and proposed application within this category.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The Capacity Building Cohort grants seek to increase investment in individual Vallejoan artists and cultural bearers' capacity through investment in individuals to have time for skill

building, practical applications to their current artists/cultural practice and business; as well as creating opportunities for incentivized collaboration and leadership opportunities for the Vallejo arts and cultural communities.

Up to twenty \$2,000 grants will be awarded to individual artists and cultural bearers to participate in a Capacity Building Cohort. Cohort members will be expected to spend up to 20 hours on cohort capacity-building activities and an additional 20 hours on follow-up, self-directed capacity-building.

Note: While this capacity-building grant directly supports up to twenty (20) individual grantees with a \$2,000 award, VAF will make seven (7) capacity-building workshops (60-90 minutes) open to the public, beginning May 2026 and culminating in February 2027. These workshops and their materials will also be digitally archived for the community to access at any time after the live events. No application is needed to join the public sessions, although registration will be required. The Vallejo Arts Fund will publicize these opportunities through our mailing list, website, and social media. Join our mailing list by emailing vafadmin@greatleap.org.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Individuals over 18, at any stage in the arts/cultural career (including artists, cultural bearers, cultural producers, arts administrators, and arts workers) with a public history of working in arts and cultural contexts for three or more years are eligible to apply to this grant opportunity. This grant opportunity is open to traditional folk artists as well as contemporary artists creating work by, for, or about cultural communities in Vallejo, CA.
- Applicants must be rooted in Vallejo and be able to demonstrate residency in the city of Vallejo or the state of California.

The following are ineligible for funding consideration:

- Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, for-profits, fiscally sponsored organizations);
- Individuals who have not been rooted in or live in Vallejo for at least three years;
- Incomplete applications or applications with inaccessible (e.g., password-protected, broken links) attachments; and
- Individuals who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation, Great Leap, Inc., or Calling Up Justice.

CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Up to six awards ranging between \$10,000 - \$20,000, with funding terms of either one or two years, will be awarded to individuals, collectives, or organizations that make, produce, teach, and/or engage in contemporary and traditional arts and cultural practices. The Cultural Communities Grant supports Vallejo-based artists, cultural bearers, collectives, and organizations whose work is grounded in the artistic and cultural practices of Vallejo's

diverse communities, particularly those communities that have been impacted by gentrification, exclusionary and racist practices, historical lack of support or investment for culturally rooted arts and traditions, and those who have remained under the radar or under-resourced in their specific arts discipline.

Applicants may seek funds to support ongoing or new artistic and/or cultural work within the performing arts, visual arts, digital and media arts, traditional folk arts, and oral or written storytelling. VAF deeply values the many forms that artistic and cultural practices can take. However, at this time, the Fund is not seeking applications for healing arts practices (such as massage therapy, reiki, or acupuncture), nail or makeup artistry, culinary arts, loctician services, tattooing, yoga instruction, or fitness and aerobics programs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be individual arts workers (e.g., cultural producers, culture bearers, creatives, cultural practitioners, teaching artists, arts administrators, or specialized technicians), collectives, or an arts /cultural organization with a track record of providing arts and cultural programming rooted in Vallejo for at least three years.
- Applicants applying as individuals must be at least 18 years of age.
- Applicants (individuals, collective, or organizations) must be able to demonstrate residency, engagement, and/or having worked within Vallejo, CA over the past three (3) years.
- Applicants must reside full-time in California.
- Applicants must be able to articulate and prove rootedness in Vallejo, CA, for at least three years

The following are ineligible for funding consideration:

- Organizations (e.g., nonprofits, for-profits, fiscally sponsored organizations) requesting funding to support their general operations;
- Individuals or organizations that have not resided, engaged, and/or worked within the city of Vallejo for at least 3 years ;
- Individuals or organizations who are requesting funding to support projects not rooted in cultural communities or non-arts/cultural organizations;
- Incomplete applications or applications with inaccessible (e.g., password-protected, broken links) attachments; and
- Individuals who have a conflict of interest (family or financial relationship) with the board, staff, or directors of the Center for Cultural Innovation, Great Leap, Inc., or Calling Up Justice.

Examples of Eligible Grant Proposals Include:

- Traditional Folk Arts & Cultural Practices in Vallejo, such as requests for funding to support Miwok basket weaving, West African drumming, or Southern Filipinx cultural dance projects.
- Contemporary Arts and Cultural Workshops, Classes, Programs, Exhibitions,

Productions, Concerts, Festivals, or Public Sharings.

- Projects that center on artistic forms, experiences, or expressions emerging from Vallejo's cultural communities.
- General Operating Support for administrative, marketing, and organizational development efforts that strengthen cultural programs and sustainability.
- Initiatives that bridge neighborhoods, generations, or cultural communities, fostering shared learning and collaboration.

PLACES AND SPACES

Up to nine awards ranging between \$5,000 - \$20,000, with funding terms of either one or two years, will be awarded to support the upkeep, maintenance, or improvements for physical places or spaces in Vallejo, CA that are part of the arts/cultural ecosystem for performing arts, visual arts, digital/media arts, folk, traditional art forms, and storytelling. The Places & Spaces Grant supports costs directly related to the use of physical places for charitable arts activities including but not limited to utilities, insurance, permits and fees required to host public art programs; temporary or minor improvements as well as approved limited capital improvements to make the space safely and effectively usable for public art programs.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must:

- Own and/or have access to a physical place OR an itinerant/pop-up space in Vallejo, CA that is part of the arts/cultural ecosystem for performing arts, visual arts, digital/media arts, folk, traditional art forms, and storytelling.
- Be a Vallejo-based individual artist, cultural bearer, collective, or organization whose work is grounded in the artistic and cultural practices of Vallejo's diverse communities
- Applicants applying as individuals must be at least 18 years of age.
- Applicants must reside full-time in California.
- Applicants (individuals, collective, or organizations) must be able to demonstrate residency, engagement, and/or having worked within Vallejo, CA over the past three (3) years.

Eligible Use of Funding (Place/Space-Related Costs):

- Grant funds may be used for reasonable costs directly related to the use of physical space for charitable arts activities, including:
- Short-term rental of studios, rehearsal rooms, performance venues, galleries, and community spaces;
- Utilities, insurance, janitorial, and security costs during the project period;
- Permits and fees required to host public arts programs;
- Temporary or minor improvements and equipment rentals necessary to make the

space safely and effectively usable for the funded program (e.g., temporary walls, risers, lighting, accessibility features).

Capital / Renovation Requests

In limited cases, grants may support capital improvements or renovations where:

- The property is owned or controlled by a 501(c)(3) organization or governmental entity;
- The improvements are necessary to carry out charitable arts programming;
- The space will be dedicated primarily to charitable uses for a substantial period; and
- Any capital expenditure must be approved in writing by the funder in advance.

Note: Cases outside of the description above must be pre-approved by CCI, at its sole discretion, and be subject to fiscal expenditure.

Ineligible Uses of Funding

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Capital improvements to privately owned property (including homes, studios, or commercial buildings) where the primary benefit is increased property value for the owner;
- Payment of mortgage principal, long-term debt service, or property taxes of property owners;
- General operating or capital costs of for-profit developers or landlords, except for fair-market rent and standard services tied to the funded program;
- Facilities owned or controlled by the funder's or grantee's board members, officers, or related parties, except on fair-market, arm's-length terms and only with prior written approval;
- Spaces used primarily for commercial or non-charitable activities;
- Political campaign activities or substantial lobbying.

Note: Given the breadth of possible costs associated with the Places and Spaces Grant, we encourage potential applicants to contact CCI at grants@cciarts.org to schedule a time to discuss your specific situation and funding request within this category.

REVIEW PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The VAF team will invite panelists with expertise in Vallejo as well as in artistic and cultural practices or production to review eligible applications and make award recommendations based on the alignment with the Fund's mission, guiding principles, and rubric.

All Applications will be evaluated based on their ability to establish the following:

Applicants will be evaluated on their demonstrated connection to Vallejo, including at least three years of local engagement and meaningful contributions to the community. Their

project must align with the VAF mission and exhibit strong artistic and cultural value, uplifting diverse practices across performance, visual, digital/media, folk, and storytelling traditions, while contributing to Vallejo's cultural life. Reviewers will assess the clarity, organization, feasibility, and budget accuracy of the proposal, as well as the applicant's ability to manage funds. Preference is given to projects led by Vallejo artists, particularly from historically excluded communities, that support new, underfunded, or under-the-radar voices and that build Vallejo's cultural capacity. Equity, care, transparency, inclusivity, and adherence to "do no harm" principles are critical. Finally, the proposal should address urgent or unmet community needs, amplify local stories, and provide meaningful impact in Vallejo neighborhoods.

Vallejo Art Fund aims to ensure that grantees reflect the diversity of the Vallejo creative landscape, with a priority for those who are underrepresented or under-the-radar in the region, field, or artistic discipline. To that end, the VAF will seek to balance the final grantee pool across various factors, including geography, disciplines, communities served, and the cultural form and/or tradition represented.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications will be accepted online ONLY through CCI's Submittable platform. Applicants MUST create an account in Submittable before they can access the grant application.

Access the Vallejo Arts Fund Youth Arts Grants online application at:
<https://centerforculturalinnovation.submittable.com/>

QUESTIONS & SUPPORT

CCI and VAF staff are here to help and listen.

For technical assistance (i.e., I'm trying to log in to Submittable but seeing an error message), please email CCI at grants@cciarts.org (include Vallejo Arts Fund in the subject line) or call 415.288.0530.

- For Deaf applicants and those with hearing loss, contact CCI using the California Relay Service—our staff is trained in making and receiving these calls. If you need technical assistance (e.g., password or upload issues), request support at <https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>. Submittable's business hours are 9 am—5 pm MT, and they aim to respond within 24 business hours.

For program support and questions (i.e., I have an idea for a project, am I eligible?), please email the VAF team at vafadmin@greatleap.org (include Vallejo Arts Fund in the subject line). You may also schedule a time to speak [here](#).