



## Press Release

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### Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) and City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) Announce Inaugural Recipients of the Creative Economic Development Fund— *An Investment Pool for Creative, Social Impact Businesses*

Los Angeles – With support from the Surdna Foundation, the **Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI)** and the **City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)** announced the **8 Creative Economic Development Fund (CEDF)** grantees' funded projects today.

The CEDF is a newly launched program that provides funding for projects that will help launch startup ventures; enable temporary, pop-up activities; and expand micro-sized creative enterprises with five or fewer employees. This year, the partnership will provide \$100,000 in grants of up to \$12,500 each to independent creative businesses, self-employed artists or cultural producers, artist collectives, or nonprofit arts organizations with earned income activities that use commercial strategies in pursuit of a social or community impact objective.

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Out of 90 applicants, the 8 selected organizations that will receive a CEDF grant are:

**Big City Forum** (Pacoima) to launch a pop-up artistic, community-based, and retail residency—Talleres Públicos—within Pacoima Neighborhood City Hall.

**GEO's Synaesthetic Emporium** (Eagle Rock and Highland Park) to expand business of artisanal sausages, custom made to reflect personal, ethnically-specific experiences presented as pop-up performances.

**Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN), Inc.** (Boyle Heights) to launch "AYE Boyle Heights" that will operate a monthly Street Tacos and Art Night event benefiting street vendors and in-residence local artist entrepreneurs.

**Mi Vida Boutique** (Highland Park) to expand a family-run marketplace of locally-produced, handmade goods.

**Otherwild** (Echo Park) to create three new lines of queer and feminist-specific products: a gender-neutral fragrance, androgynous bathing suits, and jewelry.

**Piece by Piece** (South LA) to open a storefront at Mercado La Paloma selling mosaic wares designed and handmade by those living in poverty whose participation puts them on a path to earned income.

**Public Matters LLC** (Historic Filipino Town) to train the next generation of community leaders to conduct historic-cultural tours of HiFi conducted by foot or by jeepny.

**River Wild LLC** (Elysian Valley of LA River) to establish LA River Café as a permanent place-based storefront anchoring the community.

The objective of the CEDF is to support creative enterprises that will have positive economic development and social impacts in the City of Los Angeles. In selecting the projects for funding, priority consideration was given to enterprises and their projects that benefit economically-disadvantaged communities or impact the thoroughfares of the City's Great Streets Initiative. For a list of the designated Great Streets, please visit: <http://www.lamayor.org/greatstreets>.

"Many of today's entrepreneurs not only want to make a profit, but also want to do something good for their communities. Artists, cultural producers, and independent designers are no different, and the Creative Economic Development Fund will invest in the startup and expansion of arts-businesses so that these entities can play a stronger and more visible role in the City's economic future," said **City of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti**. "This Fund is also a wonderful complement to the City's Great Streets Initiative as these are exactly the kinds of creative businesses that we hope will proliferate along the Great Streets thoroughfares."

The City of Los Angeles has become an exciting place for creative enterprises due to a desirable climate that attracts young entrepreneurs and innovators; a bustling entertainment and media industry; and a number of top-caliber art and design schools. Startups and micro-enterprises are the backbone of economic development and community vitality, yet have less access to investment and growth capital than large, more established businesses. The lack of capital is especially true for creative enterprises whose commercial strategies are applied for arts and cultural activities with social benefit aims. "The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs and the Center for Cultural Innovation developed CEDF to highlight and invest in a still-emerging segment of the City's business sector: I'm talking about entrepreneurs who want to use their artistic and cultural practices in ways that grow their businesses to achieve a positive social impact," said **Angie Kim, Interim President and CEO of the Center for Cultural Innovation**.

"This Fund is one of the first of its kind anywhere, bridging the arts and our economy while helping causes and communities," said **Danielle Brazell, General Manager of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs**. "We are excited to recognize this group of recipients of this inaugural round. Their enterprise solutions to addressing social needs demonstrates how exciting it is to be doing business—especially creatively—in Los Angeles right now."

For more information about the **Creative Economic Development Fund (CEDF)**, please visit: [www.cciarts.org](http://www.cciarts.org)

### **About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs**

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) generates and supports high quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles' 4 million residents and 40 million annual visitors. DCA advances the social and economic impact of the arts and ensures access to diverse and enriching cultural activities through: grantmaking, marketing, development, public art, community arts programming, arts education, and building partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles. For more information, please visit [www.culturela.org](http://www.culturela.org).

### **About the Center for Cultural Innovation**

The Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) was founded in 2001 as a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its mission is to promote knowledge-sharing, networking, and financial independence for individual artists and creative entrepreneurs by providing business training, grants, and incubating innovative projects that create new program knowledge, tools, and practices for artists in the field. For more information, please visit [www.cciarts.org](http://www.cciarts.org).

### **About the Surdna Foundation**

The Surdna Foundation seeks to foster sustainable communities in the United States - communities guided by principles of social justice and distinguished by healthy environments, strong local economies, and thriving cultures. For more information, please visit [www.surdna.org](http://www.surdna.org).

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