



Press Release

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

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

The CEDF is a 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.

Out of 54 applicants, the 8 selected organizations that will receive a CEDF grant are:

Across Our Kitchen Tables (Boyle Heights) to launch a new social enterprise that will serve as a cultural culinary arts hub geared toward Women of Color (WOC), generating more relevant business models based on objectives of social and cultural responsibility and critical interventions into conventional food systems.

Day Space Night (Chinatown), a minority-owned fashion label with a retail store in historic Chinatown, to create a new line of clothes with non-Western silhouettes informed by different cultural traditions, utilizing locally-sourced materials and labor.

Foreground (multiple neighborhoods), a start-up collective of queer and trans, mostly of color, creative entrepreneurs that act as a support and learning exchange space as well as to create business opportunities with three pop-up Queer Marketplaces to sell their artisan wares, food, and art.

Graybayne Film/Media (East Hollywood), a female, African American-owned start-up film and media company to purchase equipment to expand business and subsidize cause-

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based nonprofit efforts, such as “Chocolate Milk”—a digital storytelling project normalizing breastfeeding for African American mothers.

Las Fotos Project (Chinatown) to develop L.A. Foto Connect, a new revenue-generating social venture program that will expand on the enterprise’s current model of teaching photography and business skills to young women in low-income and under-served areas of East and South L.A.

Narrated Objects, LLC, (Los Feliz), a collective of artists, writers, editors, and designers who will produce two Los Angeles-themed books to raise awareness about urgent subjects in Los Angeles: *I Heart P-22: A Coloring and Activity Book Celebrating L.A.’s Most Famous Mountain Lion*, featuring illustrations by community members from across the city; and *Dear Seller: Real Estate Love Letters from Los Angeles*, a book of real “love letters” from prospective home buyers to sellers, with a percentage of proceeds benefitting an organization providing affordable housing.

Piece by Piece (South Los Angeles) to increase the impact, sales, and income for low-income and formerly homeless artisans generated by a bricks-and-mortar retail gallery at Mercado La Paloma through new partnerships, public demonstrations, retail training, and other new initiatives.

River Wild, LLC, (Elysian Valley), providing a sense of place and services to enhance quality-of-life for residents of Elysian Valley with the “Chicken & Egg Grocery Co-op,” a new community food hub in Elysian Valley, replacing a former liquor store, that will host culinary arts events and collaborate with local artisans.

The objective of the CEDF is to support creative enterprises that will have positive economic development and positively impact 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.

“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**.

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.

“Center for Cultural Innovation and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs 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, President and CEO of Center for Cultural Innovation**.

"This Fund is one of the first of its kind, 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 another group of recipients with enterprising solutions to address social needs and demonstrate the importance and impact of conducting business creatively in Los Angeles."

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

About Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI)

Center for Cultural Innovation 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 cciarts.org.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles' vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grant making, public art, community arts, and strategic marketing and development. DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

For more information, please visit culturela.org or follow DCA on Facebook at facebook.com/culturela; Instagram [@culture_la](https://instagram.com/culture_la); and Twitter [@culture_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la).

About the Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation

Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation invests in innovative solutions and community leaders to build a more just, equitable, and sustainable world in which all people thrive. For more information, please visit rpdff.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 surdna.org.

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