



THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY CAN POWER CALIFORNIA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Any investment in infrastructure, community, and workforce recovery must include the creative industries, arts and culture organizations and arts workers.

Recognizing the disproportionate impact to California's Creative Industries due to the COVID Pandemic and the state mandated closures and recognizing the value and impact of the arts, culture and creative sector to power community engagement, social cohesion, wellness, healing, and state and local economies, California Arts Advocates asks for the following resources and investment from the Newsom Administration and California Legislature.

1. For the CA Relief grant program: **Increase funding for vulnerable small businesses and nonprofits** that have been forced to close and unable to earn revenue due to the pandemic. We urge the California Budget Committee Chairs to **support at least \$50 million in immediate relief funding for cultural institutions** and increase the grant sizes as well and remove the cap on budget size so all organizations can apply. We also agree with the Legislative Analyst's office examination of this program that there is currently no way to gauge if the grants are being dispersed fairly and to those who need it the most. We ask for more transparency in this relief program.
2. **Support the CA Creative Corps Pilot Program** for \$15 million (\$5m in 20-21 and \$10m 21-22) as introduced by Governor Newsom in his budget proposal to the Legislature. Let's put creative workers back to work in service to public health.
3. Increase funding for the state arts agency to at least **\$1 per capita per person to \$40 million** in ongoing funds from the general budget.
4. Urge the Newsom Administration to issue **guidelines for live events and performing arts now** in collaboration with industry experts so businesses have ample time to prepare venues and staffing for a safe reopening.
5. Provide **funding and resources to reopen arts safely** in the form of loans or grants for needs such as audience and performer COVID testing, digital broadband program delivery and staffing transition to meet new standards, and capital improvements to retrofit venues that may not have the ventilation systems needed for proper airflow.

6. Urge policymakers to continue dedicated state and federal support for California's creative industries. If and when a second relief package includes state funding, we ask for a **dedicated funding stream to creative businesses organizations** that are still closed due to the state's blueprint for reopening and to local arts agencies that have lost their TOT (transit occupancy tax) and have seen dramatic budget cuts in municipalities across CA.
7. Provide financial support in the form of **forgivable loans and artist relief grants** for independent artists and self-employed workers.
8. Consider the creation of an **unemployment assistance program and payroll system at the state level for self-employed individuals** to ensure that post-pandemic they can enjoy the financial support system currently only available to employees.
9. Develop innovative strategies to **utilize venues for vaccine distribution** and other needs until we can gather safely again. Consider state supported outdoor pop-up events employing local artists to acclimate patrons to return live events safely and demonstrate that safe behavior protocols are possible while experiencing something that brings communities together. (see NY Governor [Cuomo's plan](#).)
10. **Expand the CA Creative Corps Pilot Program to ongoing legislation** to employ and/or commission creative workers in statewide infrastructure programs, as artists-in-residence in government agencies, to offer employment training and mentorships, expand opportunities for teaching artists, and creative economy businesses to produce free and low-cost cultural experiences, with a specific focus on living-wage creative jobs.

Simply put, there is no California recovery or rebuilding of California's economy without the arts, culture and creative industries. From rural towns to big cities, arts and creativity strengthen the fabric of every California community. With the expected \$15 billion surplus this one time bonus of funds should in part be dedicated to restoring the creative workforce, businesses and nonprofits that contribute so much to every community in California an industry that represents \$230.3 billion to California's economy and 8.2% of the state's GDP—a larger share than Construction or Transportation.

For more information please contact Julie Baker, Executive Director, 916-296-1838, Julie@californiaartsadvocates.org
Or Jason Schmelzer, Shaw, Yoder, Antwih, Schmelzer & Lange, 916-549-0898
jason@SYASLpartners.com