

VALLEJO ARTISTS MUTUAL FUND

2026 GRANTEE ANNOUNCEMENT

Center for Cultural Innovation

OUR GRATITUDE TO THE COMMUNITY

Launched in May 2026, the Vallejo Artists Mutual Fund (the "Fund") provides direct financial support to Vallejo-based individual artists and cultural leaders, as well as organizations, whose work meaningfully contributes to keeping the local creative community active, connected, and thriving. From May to October 2026, artists across the City of Vallejo were invited to participate in a Pay-It-Forward program designed to empower artists through a local redistribution process where they named who and what artistic work and cultural organizations were valuable in their community. Through this process of local resource redistribution and mutual support, $1,000,000 in unrestricted funding was awarded to individual artists, cultural leaders, and organizations across the city.

THE FUND

This is the third round of funding from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, administered by CCI, as part of five years of programmatic support for artists and cultural leaders who have been integral to Vallejo's creative vitality. Each year thus far has been an opportunity to try and learn how to reach the anchors of the arts and culture community in as deep and broad a way as possible. In the 2026 funding round, the program moved away from a traditional, competitive grant program juried by outsiders towards an approach that directly empowered artists living and working in the city to decide where resources go and to name and uplift those whose artistic and cultural contributions have been the most meaningful to them and relevant to the region.

Over a six-month period, CCI administered a Pay-It-Forward design that invited artists and cultural leaders – whose creative work and individual commitment to Vallejo's arts and culture scene amplify visibility, strengthen artistic capacity, and enrich the city's cultural life – to participate in a process within which they "referred" another artist and cultural leader in their community whose work was meaningfully impacting the local creative ecosystem. Each artist who provided a referral, or "paid-it-forward", was awarded a $7,500 grant and had the opportunity to "tap" another artist to receive an award. Additionally, each artist had the opportunity to name or "tap" an organization whose publicly accessible art programming was meaningfully impacting the community. No individual could be referred more than once or receive more than $15,000.

At the end of this process, $1,000,000 was awarded in direct funding support to 77 individual artists and cultural leaders, and 15 organizations.

We are grateful to the community advisors, previous program leadership, community members who participated in focus groups, surveys, and ongoing conversations, and to the artistic vision of individuals deeply rooted in Vallejo. Your insight, feedback, and collaboration have continued to inform and guide the work of this Fund. Additionally, we are grateful that the Vallejo Artists Mutual Fund is made possible with support from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

THE GRANTEES

The unrestricted funding nature of the program allowed individuals and organizations to decide for themselves how best to use the funding to meet their economic needs – whether to cover rent, pay staff salaries, equipment or venue costs, pay off debt, hire consulting support, or meet other needs.

The **77 individual artists and cultural leaders** are working across various artistic disciplines, including Theatre, Media, Film, Music, Folk/Traditional Arts, Literary Arts, and Dance, and many are engaging in a broad spectrum of work that sustains a local creative ecosystem. From individuals hosting community healing events or preserving cultural heritage through traditional gatherings to those collaborating on cooperative mutual aid structures or painting murals that keep the city's history alive, this cohort of grantees reflects the breadth and depth of creative work happening in Vallejo. Through their efforts, they enrich the city's cultural vibrancy and strengthen its creative and economic relevance throughout the Bay Area.

With grantees that represent a wide geographic spread of neighborhoods, from North Vallejo to South, Downtown to Central, East, and West, this grantee cohort reached a broad segment of Vallejo residents. Many grantees shared with us that this funding arrived at a critical point in their work, helping them cover living expenses, production and exhibition costs, compensation to fellow creatives to collaborate, travel for creative research and presentations, to name a few! We also heard that this funding covered basic needs, such as housing, food, and immediate healthcare support, helping many feel supported during a time of financial uncertainty.

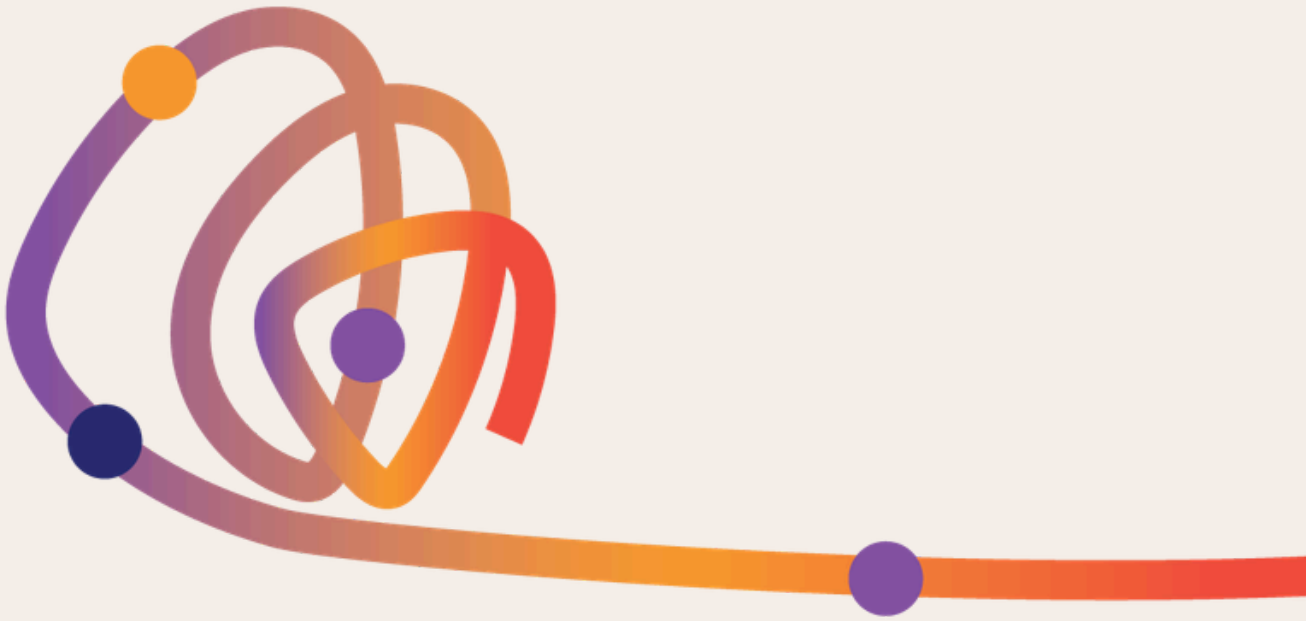
As part of this program's design, individual artists were also able to pay-it-forward to organizations offering publicly accessible art programming. Through this, **fifteen (15) arts and culture organizations** received unrestricted grant awards in recognition of their work — including, but not limited to, organizations providing accessible art classes, creative and professional development workshops, affordable art supplies, fiscal sponsorship, space for vending and performing, and much more!

The 2026 Vallejo Artists Mutual Fund grantees and community-advisors include:

- Abel Rodriguez
- Alma Perez
- Araceli Cortez
- Ariel Marin
- Askari Sowonde
- Brandon Gamoras-Young
- Calvin Ellington-Dville
- Carlos Tiburcio Justo
- Carmen Slack
- Channa Booker
- Christian Alberto
- Christina Abad
- Christina Walkup
- Cynaka Harper
- Dante Johnson
- David McAdams
- Diana Tenes
- Dominique Toney
- Edgar Arturo Camacho
- Espy Marie
- Eugene Buban
- Evan Broome
- Guillermo Landlaker
- Izzy Drumgoole
- Jacalyn Eyvonne
- Jaiya Stafford
- Jeanne Lorenz
- Jennie Mojica
- Jennifer Lockette
- Jeremy Batha
- Jessica Andrade
- Joel Rivas
- John Mason
- Joshua Icban
- Kaci Janae Lee
- Kaleb Berndt
- Karen Finlay
- Kerby Lynch
- Kim DeOcampo
- Kristin Woods
- Lamar Crockett
- Leah Tumerman
- Liberty Pierson
- Loba Yates
- Lorenzo Crocket
- Lori Herrera
- Luis Arnold
- Maria Allyson Manuel
- Maria Stats
- Marie Metran
- Marie Neri
- Mario Saucedo
- Matthew Gaviola
- Meja Pannell-Tyehimba
- Melissa Penny
- Michael Rosenthal
- Osvaldo Ramos
- Peter Pomele
- Ralph Jefferson
- Ramiro “Miro” Salazar
- Rebecca Amick
- Robert Roses
- Rob’Lena Miles
- Sal Garcia
- Salvador Flores
- Sandra MacFadden
- Sara Anders
- Selia Lucero
- Sherry Prewitt
- Simon Ajero
- Stan Clark
- Stephanie Brown
- Tamika Bailey
- Thomas J. Walkup
- Trinity Sharp
- Verlannia Manchester
- Veronica Lindsay
- Vince Rossi
- Vincent Rillera
- Vincent Seymour
- Whitney Smith
- Yuliana Preciado
- Zachary Greer

The 2026 Vallejo Artists Mutual Fund arts and culture organization grantees include:

- Artiszen Vallejo
- Autonomous Gallery
- Bay Area Cinema
- Creative Reuse of Vallejo
- The Exchange
- Free Music Collective
- Mare Island Art Studios
- Mira Theatre Guild
- Personal Space
- Slime World
- Solano AIDS Coalition
- Treebed Design
- Vallejo Art Walk
- Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum
- Vallejo Pista Sa Nayon




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