



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: October 15, 2024
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Meeting Date: November 13, 2024
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services
FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture, and Community Services
SUBJECT: 2024 Cultural Grants (Equity, Indigenous, Individual Artists, Cultural Spaces, Chinatown)

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve 13 Cultural Equity grants totalling \$340,264 from the 2024 Cultural Grants Operating Budget to the organizations listed in Appendix A, and for the amounts recommended for each organization in the “Grant Recommendation” column in Appendix A.
- B. THAT Council approve eight Cultural Indigenous grants totalling \$355,000 (\$280,000 from the 2024 Cultural Grants Operating Budget and \$75,000 from the 2024 Arts and Culture operating budget) to the organizations listed in Appendix A and for the amounts recommended for each organization in the “Grant Recommendation” Column in Appendix A.
- C. THAT Council approve a grant of \$60,000 from the 2024 Cultural Grants Operating Budget to The ArtStarts in Schools Society for renewal and delivery of the Creative Spark Vancouver program, which supports diverse artists working with youth.
- D. THAT Council approve one Affordable Spaces grant of \$24,116 to 110 Arts Co-operative from the 2024 Cultural Grants Operating Budget.
- E. THAT Council approve a Making Space for Arts and Culture capital grant of \$250,000 to the Eastside Arts Society to support multi-year advancement of an Eastside Arts District, from the False Creek Amenity Share and Density Reserve.
- F. THAT, subject to the approval of Recommendation E, Council approve an increase to the 2023-2026 Capital Plan and the Multi-Year Capital Project Budget for the Cultural Spaces Grants program by \$250,000, to be funded from the

- False Creek Amenity Share and Density Reserve.
- G. THAT Council approve a grant of \$30,000 to the Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society (VCBIA) from the Great Beginnings Fund to support a process to develop advice to the City on a draft vision and program for an economic development pilot project for Chinatown Plaza, in support of key goals in the Chinatown Cultural District Framework.
- H. THAT Council delegate its authority to the City's General Manager, Arts, Culture, and Community Services (or their designate) to execute grant agreements that include terms and conditions that are consistent with this report, that satisfy the City's General Manager, Arts, Culture, and Community Services (or their designate) and the City's Director, Legal Services, and disburse the grants as described in this report.
- I. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of these Recommendations unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.
- J. THAT, pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the Vancouver Charter, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A and Appendix B of this report, that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency, to be contributing to the culture of Vancouver.

Recommendations A to G require 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members under section 206(1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report recommends a total of \$1,059,380 in grants to 25 cultural groups to support the delivery of critical programs and services by xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, Vancouver artists and cultural organizations, for the benefit of the cultural community and the general public.

These recommendations support key civic policy and strategic directions as follows:

- *Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities 2023-2026*
- *Culture|Shift*, the City's 10-year culture plan, including the *Vancouver Music Strategy* and *Making Space for Arts and Culture*
- The City's *Reconciliation Framework* and *UNDRIP Action Plan 2024-2028*
- The City's *Equity Framework* and *Accessibility Strategy*
- *Chinatown Cultural District Framework*

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- September 10, 2019: Council approved *Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture* and *Making Space for Arts and Culture*, and the *Vancouver Music Strategy*.
- July 25, 2023: Council approved the 2024 Arts and *Culture Grants Program Framework* which outlines the policy, programs, adjudication process, and accountability requirements to support ongoing and emerging needs in the local arts and culture sector. Council also directed staff to conduct a jurisdictional review of different municipal

granting models for the delivery of the Arts and Cultural Grants Program (RTS 15658 Clause C) and report back on the potential for expanding delegated authorities within the context of granting.

- October 31, 2023: Council approved *Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities 2023-2026*, which outlines Council's key priorities.
- June 12, 2024: Council approved the *Chinatown Cultural District Framework* which establishes a comprehensive approach to support the renewed vibrancy of the neighbourhood, including both economic and community development.
- October 22, 2024: Staff reported back to Council on the findings of the Municipal Grants Jurisdictional Review and Arts, Culture and Social Grant Program Refinements.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

The City of Vancouver invests in critical operating and project grants to local arts and culture non-profit groups through various grant streams to support arts and cultural activity in Vancouver. This investment is guided by key goals in civic policy and strategic directions including *Vibrant Vancouver, City Council's Strategic Priorities 2023-2026* and the City's 10-year arts and culture plan *Culture|Shift. Culture|Shift* centres the voices of underrepresented artists and organizations through two key directions – (1) Reconciliation and (2) Cultural Equity and Accessibility – to achieve greater equity for those who have been systemically excluded in funding programs.

The grant streams addressed as part of this report include:

- Cultural Equity Grants
- Cultural Indigenous Grants
- Individual Artists Fund
- Affordable Spaces Grants

In addition, strategic grants are being recommended to be directly awarded to the Eastside Arts District to support the advancement of a cultural district, and to the Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society, moving forward the goals of the *Chinatown Cultural District Framework*

The grant process follows the Cultural Grants Program Framework approved by Council in July 2023, which includes updates to create efficiencies and better align with Council direction. On October 22, 2024, staff reported back on the jurisdictional review of municipal granting models for delivery of social and cultural services grant programs, as directed by Council. Further refinements to the cultural grant program will be guided by that report. The distribution and impact of cultural grant streams and other ACCS grants are reported through the [ACCS Annual Grant Impact Report](#).

Discussion

Grant Recommendations

Recommendation A: Cultural Equity Grants - \$340,264 to 13 organizations

The Cultural Equity Grant program was launched in 2020 as a key action of *Culture|Shift* to achieve greater equity in the City's support of the increasingly diverse arts and culture sector. These grants support core operations, and capacity building within the organization for artistic and cultural programming, and other needs to advance their mission. This is a low-barrier program for equity-deserving artists and groups that uses a relational approach to honour and respect the deep knowledge held by organizations and their people, and endeavours to enable positive information exchange and support.

The recommended recipients were invited into the program based on community input that identified groups advancing equity in practice, through policy, programs, and the people in decision-making roles. Common characteristics of groups funded through this program are:

- They support equity-deserving artists and communities in ways that are embedded in their mission, leadership, operations, programs, and services,
- They are recognized by their peers as having high impact and trust within the cultural community,
- They provide programs and resources to equity-deserving artists and communities, and
- Are challenging dominant operational models to build organizations in organic ways that reflect the communities they serve.

Approving these grants would renew stable operational funding for 12 organizations (and one new to the program) supporting artists and participants in accessing programs and spaces that reflect their distinct communities. The grantees include:

- Vocal Eye Descriptive Arts Society, the first dedicated live description service for blind and partially sighted people in Canada, providing greater access to Vancouver theatre, arts and cultural events.
- Punjabi Market Collective Society who are working toward revitalizing Vancouver's historic Punjabi Market – the first “Little India” in North America – and creating a hub for arts and culture.

Recommendation B: Cultural Indigenous Grants - \$355,000 to 8 organizations

A dedicated Cultural Indigenous Grants program was launched in 2019 to advance Reconciliation goals in *Culture|Shift* to increase investment and leadership opportunities for x^wməθk^wəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and Urban Indigenous artists. The program supports Indigenous arts, culture, and language including professional development and mentorship for Indigenous artists and organizations. Taking a low-barrier approach, the program offers a more relational, flexible process and reflects Indigenous self-determined ways and offers potential for a pathway to mainstream core funding programs, if desired.

The recommended funding would support many publicly accessible Indigenous-led events including the fifth edition of Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week and an event for National Indigenous Peoples Day hosted by Carnegie Community Centre, as well as groups maintaining and evolving traditional and contemporary Indigenous cultural practices, from Métis jigging to Salish weaving.

The three local First Nations Band Councils are recommended to receive \$40,000 to support critical self-determined projects that are creating access to history, language, and places for their communities and the public. In 2023, an additional \$25,000 was allocated to strategically align with language revitalization priorities identified by the local Nations. This \$25,000 in support for each Nation is recommended to continue for 2024.

The Cultural Indigenous Grants to local Nations would advance recommendations for City programs and services to support, revitalize, and promote local Indigenous languages while also ensuring Indigenous partners are resourced to meaningfully provide input on these recommendations. The City of Vancouver has prioritized renaming projects, creating opportunities for the Nations to write *hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm* and *Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh* back onto the land. In order to participate in the public sharing of their language, the local Nations maintain that City support is critical for their own language revitalization.

The additional funding for languages responds to UNDRIP Strategy actions, specifically to “expand supports to return the original languages to the land, through naming, grants for cultural programming, and public education on *hən̓q̓əmi̓n̓əm* and *Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh*”.

Recommendation C: Grant – \$60,000 - to The ArtStarts in Schools for Creative Spark Vancouver

The Creative Spark Vancouver program implements a key action of *Culture|Shift*, by increasing support to individual artists in partnership with ArtStarts in Schools. The program provides grants of up to \$5,000 to individual emerging artists working with youth. It is a low-barrier program that provides opportunities for emerging artists to secure their first grant, to gain practical experience and receive mentorship from ArtStarts staff, to engage directly with youth, and to work within the public education system. The program prioritizes emerging artists and cultural practitioners from the *x̓wməθk̓wəy̓ əm* (Musqueam), *Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh* (Squamish) and *səlilwətał* (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, and artists from equity-deserving communities. The program has the following goals:

- Increase support for individual emerging artists and projects that reflect the diversity of artistic and cultural forms in Vancouver,
- Build the capacity and confidence of emerging artists working with young people and art and culture-based learning,
- Provide young people opportunities to engage actively in art and culture, particularly artists and young people from equity-deserving communities, and
- Increase capacity of emerging artists with skill-building opportunities and access to ArtStarts’ resources.

Since 2015, over 160 Vancouver artists have been supported to create impactful projects through this program involving several hundred young people. In recent intakes, over 90% of

funded recipients were from equity-deserving communities. Recently funded projects include a spring break performing arts intensive for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. Information on this program can be found at <https://artstarts.com/creativesparkvancouver>

Recommendation D: Affordable Spaces Grant – \$24,116 – to the 110 Arts Co-operative

This operational grant stream supports facility operating costs for non-profit space operators who provide subsidized affordable space for professional artists and cultural organizations. In May 2024, Council approved Affordable Spaces grants to 18 organizations totalling \$305,000. Staff are recommending a grant of \$24,116 to the 110 Arts Co-operative, operator of The Post at 750, an 8,500 square foot City-controlled cultural hub in the CBC building downtown. Home to DOXA, PuSh, Music on Main and Touchstone Theatre, this one-time grant is to support significant increases in space costs, pandemic recovery as well as other unforeseen issues.

Recommendation E and F: Making Space for Arts and Culture Capital Grant to Support Eastside Arts District – \$250,000

Staff are recommending a capital grant of \$250,000 to the Eastside Arts Society to support advancement of an Eastside Arts District, with a focus on planning required to retain or secure affordable artist shared production spaces at risk in the district. This is the first planning step in what staff anticipate will be a multi-year year process.

The work includes identifying critical needs and opportunities to procure spaces, business planning, governance, capital costing, priority setting, identifying community partnerships and funding, supportive City land use policies and other work required. It will also identify future considerations related to the declaration of an Eastside Arts District including funding. This grant aligns with the [Council Motion on Declaration of Eastside Arts District](#) (2020) and recent Council memo providing an update on this work.

Recommendation G: Grant to the Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society - \$30,000

This Chinatown strategic priority grant will fund the development of advice to inform an economic development pilot in the Chinatown Plaza, a key goal of the *Chinatown Cultural District Framework* approved by Council on June 12, 2024. While the Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society (VCBIA) will administer the grant, they along with the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association (VCMA) have formed an initial working group representing many Chinatown small businesses. Together, they will develop advice on how to reimagine the Chinatown Plaza as an economic and cultural anchor, a sustainable draw for Chinatown and restore its place in the community. This grant will support concept development and consultation to test and validate the vision with the broader Chinatown community in order to inform advice to the City.

A full list of all recommended grantees is in Appendix A.

Financial Implications

The sources of funding for these recommendations are the 2024 Cultural Grants Operating and Capital Budget, the 2024 ACCS Operating budget, and the Great Beginnings Fund, as summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 – 2024 Cultural Grants Budget (Operating & Capital)

Rec	Program Grants Stream	2024 Budget	Previously Approved	Rec. in this Report	Balance
	Projects (CASC)	\$1,020,000	\$1,020,000		\$0
	Cultural Learning/Sharing	\$200,420	\$200,420		\$0
	Operating – Institutions	\$3,842,080	\$3,842,080		\$0
	Operating – Annual	\$2,071,725	\$2,071,725		\$0
	Operating – Multiyear	\$2,752,900	\$2,752,900		\$0
	Theatre Rental	\$2,953,731	\$2,953,358		\$373
C	Individual Artists Fund	\$60,000		\$60,000	\$0
B	Indigenous	\$280,000		\$280,000	\$0
A	Equity	\$340,264		\$340,264	\$0
	Cultural Tourism Events Fund	\$150,000	\$150,000		\$0
D	Affordable Spaces	\$329,116	\$305,000	\$24,116	\$0
	Total Operating	\$14,000,236	\$13,295,483	\$704,380	\$373
E + F	Cultural Spaces - Eastside Arts Society			\$250,000	n/a
	Total Capital			\$250,000	n/a
B	Indigenous Languages Funds			\$75,000	n/a
	Total ACCS Operating			\$75,000	n/a
G	Great Beginnings Fund – VCBIA			\$30,000	n/a
	TOTAL – All Grants			\$1,059,380	n/a

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with the report’s recommendations.

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**APPENDIX A
GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendation A: Cultural Equity Grants			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	African Friendship Society	Provides cultural, artistic, educational, social, and community events that reaffirm and restore cultural dignity for Black and African communities.	20,000
2	Afro Van Connect Society*	Empowers people of African Descent through conversation, collaboration, creation and performance by gathering vibrant, creative minds, and increasing the visibility of unserved communities.	25,000
3	Black Arts Vancouver Society	Nurtures the arts expression of Pan-African youth in Vancouver, by providing tools, community, and space for any and all creative articulation, at no cost to participants.	15,000
4	Chapel Sound Art Foundation**	Supports creative expression for local emerging artists in multidisciplinary electronic art and music, without artistic boundaries and regardless of a person's race, class, gender or orientation.	25,000
5	Diwali Celebration Society	Engages with communities through workshops to share the key philosophies of Diwali and showcase diverse artists who practice in a variety of disciplines to encourage inclusiveness.	15,000
6	Hogan's Alley Society	Advances the social, political, economic, and cultural well-being of people of African descent through the delivery of inclusive housing, built spaces, and culturally informed programming.	25,000
7	New Old World Music Society	Bridges the gap between ancient and the contemporary cultural music in a fresh and captivating way that produces quality programs for audiences and creates meaningful work for artists.	20,000

8	Odd Meridian Arts Society**	Supports the research, creation, and performance of contemporary dance and contemporary art and related practices, for creatives who identify as equity-seeking.	44,264
9	Punjabi Market Collective Society	Supports the revitalization of the historic neighbourhood on Main Street between 48th and 51st Avenues, the first “Little India” in North America.	26,000
10	re:Naissance Opera	Empowers storytellers and produces stories that have been excluded from the operatic space, especially the stories of artists that are IBPOC, female / Trans / non-binary identifying, and that have diverse lived experiences and / or intersecting identities.	35,000
11	Recorded Movement Society**	Provides high-quality public presentations of film/video works, producing public art exhibitions, presentations, and performance art(s) events with a focus on youth (under 25), first-time dance/movement-on-screen filmmakers, and BIPOC and LGBTQ2+ artists.	30,000
12	Vancouver Asian Film Festival Society**	Programs an Asian film festival; incubates and empowers Asian Canadian actors, artists, creators, and filmmakers through capacity building, mentorship, and professional development that will enhance artistic representation and educate and entertain audiences.	30,000
13	VocalEye Descriptive Arts Society	Makes arts and cultural events more accessible for people who are blind and partially sighted.	30,000
			340,264

Recommendation B: Cultural Indigenous Grants			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	All My Relations Indigenous Society**	Founder of Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week, produces and supports Indigenous cultural events with the goal of being a strong, positive connecting force for Indigenous culture.	42,500

2	Carnegie Community Centre Association **	Provides social, educational, cultural, and recreational activities for the benefit of low-income people of the Downtown Eastside.	32,500
3	Compaigni V'ni Dansi Society dba V'ni Dansi**	Creates and performs traditional and contemporary aspects of Métis culture and artistic expression within Vancouver's vibrant arts and culture milieu.	30,000
4	Mortal Coil Performance Society	Sponsor organization for Tsatsu Stalkqayu (Coastal Wolf Pack), who provides educational opportunities and creates imaginative theatre and spectacle for audiences of all ages through the use of stilts, puppets, masks and fantastic costuming.	25,000
5	O.Dela Arts Society**	Supports the creation and production of contemporary Indigenous choreography by women through community-engaged projects, creative collaboration across discipline and generation, and new project commissions.	30,000
6	səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)**	Funding to support self-determined cultural and language revitalization priorities.	65,000
7	SKwxwu7Mesh Uxxwumixw (Squamish Nation)**	Funding to support self-determined cultural and language revitalization priorities.	65,000
8	xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam Indian Band)**	Funding to support self-determined cultural and language revitalization priorities.	65,000
			355,000

Recommendation C: Individual Artists Fund			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	The Art Starts in Schools Society	Delivers the Creative Spark Vancouver program, providing grants up to \$5,000 for individual emerging artists working with youth.	60,000
			60,000

Recommendation D: Cultural Spaces - Affordable Spaces Grants			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	110 Arts Cooperative dba The Post at 750	Funding to supports the operator of an 8,500 square foot City-controlled cultural hub in the CBC building downtown, to assist with significant increases in space costs, pandemic recovery as well as other unforeseen issues.	24,116
			24,116

Recommendation E and F: Cultural Spaces – Capital Grants (False Creek Amenity Share and Density Reserve)			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	Eastside Arts Society	Funding to support the advancement of an Eastside Arts District, with a focus on planning required to retain or secure affordable artist shared production spaces at risk in the district.	250,000
			250,000

Recommendation G: Chinatown Strategic Priority Grant (New Beginnings Fund)			
	Organization	Description	Grant Recommendation
1	Vancouver Chinatown BIA Society	Funding to support the development of advice to inform an economic development pilot on how to reimagine the Chinatown Plaza as an economic and cultural anchor.	30,000
			30,000

* Denotes grants with conditions

** These grants include the base grant plus a one-time top up or additional grant for 2024

**APPENDIX B
METRICS**

Table 1 – Grants Metrics

Grant Program	# Grants Requested	# Grants Recomm.	\$ Grants Requested	\$ Grants Recomm.	%
Cultural Equity	13	13	\$340,264	\$340,264	100
Cultural Indigenous	8	8	\$355,000	\$355,000	100
Individual Artists	1	1	\$60,000	\$60,000	100
Affordable Spaces	1	1	\$25,000	\$24,116	96
Capital Infrastructure	1	1	\$250,000	\$250,000	100
Chinatown Strategic Priority Grant	1	1	\$30,000	\$30,000	100
Total	25	25	\$1,060,2649	\$1,059,380	100