California Arts Council Celebrates Historic State Investments in Arts and Culture

New investments include $4 million for California Cultural Districts program and $10 million for general operating support grants.

SACRAMENTO, CA, UNITED STATES, September 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On Friday, September 18, 2026, Governor Gavin Newsom signed AB 113, the 2026 Budget Bill Junior, which includes significant new investments in California's arts, culture and creative sector through the California Arts Council, California's only statewide funder for the arts. Approved by the Legislature, the budget bill jr. provides a one-time investment of $4 million for the California Cultural Districts program and an additional $10 million in general operating support grants for arts organizations.

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> *Danielle Brazell, Executive Director, California Arts Council*

The California Arts Council today expressed its gratitude to Governor Newsom and the Legislature for the investments, which strengthen California's arts and cultural infrastructure, support artists and cultural workers, and advance a creative economy that contributes to the state's economic competitiveness, workforce and quality of life.

The funding comes during the California Arts Council's 50th anniversary year, formally recognized by Governor Newsom in April with a proclamation honoring five decades of the agency's work supporting arts, culture and creative expression.

"This is an extraordinary investment in the people, organizations and communities that make California one of the most creative places in the world," said California Arts Council Chair Roxanne Messina Captor. "We are deeply grateful to Governor Newsom and the Legislature for recognizing that arts and culture are fundamental to strong communities, a thriving economy and who we are as Californians."

"This investment comes at a meaningful moment for the California Arts Council and California's creative field," said California Arts Council Executive Director Danielle Brazell. "As we celebrate 50 years, Governor Newsom and the Legislature are investing in the infrastructure that helps creativity thrive statewide. General Operating Support gives organizations the flexibility to sustain their people and their work, while Cultural District funding strengthens the places,

traditions and creative ecosystems that make California distinctive. We are deeply grateful for this commitment to arts, culture and California's creative future."

Strengthening California's Cultural Infrastructure

The Budget Bill Junior includes two major investments in California Arts Council programs. The appointed Council will provide policy oversight as the California Arts Council determines the structure for distributing the competitive grant funding. Council members set grantmaking policy and make final award decisions, consistent with the terms of the appropriation. The agency will share program guidelines, application timelines and additional implementation details as they become available.

$4 million for California Cultural Districts

The investment provides new resources for the California Cultural Districts program, supporting communities that preserve and celebrate California's diverse cultural heritage while fostering local economic development, tourism, community identity and creative vitality.

$10 million for general operating support grants

The funding will provide flexible general operating support to arts organizations, helping them strengthen operations, support staff and artists, sustain programming and respond to community needs. General operating support is critical to the long-term health of the arts and cultural sector because organizations can direct resources where they are needed most.

Investments Reaching Communities Across California

California's creative economy is also a powerful economic engine. Arts and cultural production contributes $288.9 billion to California's economy—7.5% of the state economy—and supports more than 821,000 arts and cultural jobs, with workers earning $136.2 billion in wages and benefits.

The investments come as California advances its first sector-specific creative economy strategic plan, California's Future Is Creative: Strategies for Cultural Resilience, Economic Growth, and Global Leadership. Led by the California Arts Council, the plan sets a vision for an inclusive and resilient creative economy that empowers artists, cultural workers and entrepreneurs while strengthening California's workforce, economic competitiveness and global leadership.

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Members of the California Arts Council include: Roxanne Messina Captor, Chair; Nicola Miner, Vice Chair; Roque Barros; Caleb Duarte; Vicki Estrada; Leah Goodwin; Roy Hirabayashi; Alex Israel; Dorka Keehn; Phil Mercado; Rick Stein. Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov.

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