



April 27, 2026

Flagstaff Arts Council dba Creative Flagstaff

To: Flagstaff City Council

From: Julie Connick, Executive Director, Creative Flagstaff

*The mission of Creative Flagstaff is to provide and support arts, science, and cultural opportunities that foster an engaged, equitable, and imaginative community.*

### Report on Funding Allocation and Benefits Achieved through Grant Process

#### Creative Flagstaff: Lead Arts Agency

*\$50,575 ongoing and additional one-time \$125,000 leadership investment, and additional \$100,000 for festivals/events.*

Funding in FY26 supported operations and ongoing exhibitions, programming, and performances at Coconino Center for the Arts (CCA):

- **Exhibitions:** CCA produced **10 Exhibitions** (5 in the Main Gallery and 5 in the Project Gallery). Attendance records show a total visitation of over **8500 visitors** for exhibitions, workshops, and presentations.
- **Programming:** Relevant programming will accompany each exhibition with guest experts and educators expanding on the exhibition content through lectures, panel discussions, and art workshops, with **22 presentations** offered in FY26 to date. All presenters were paid an honorarium for their services.
- **Theater Concerts, Performances & Presentations:** CCA hosted over **50 performances** and presentations, with ticket sales reflecting **3500 attendees** to date in FY26.
- **Community Art Markets:** CCA offered **2 Artisan Markets** in FY26 supporting over **45 artisans** and vendors.
- **Multigenerational Programming:**
  - **Annual Youth Arts Exhibition** featured a record number of **500 art pieces** by over **300 youth** artists.
  - **Free Youth Arts Workshops** are offered during each exhibition; in FY26 **10 workshops** have engaged over **120 children**.
  - **Exhibition-Specific Curriculum** created by local arts educators for youth and family engagement
  - **Free Customized Fieldtrips** for K-12 schools and sliding scale for university classes. In FY26 **12 fieldtrips** have served **288 students**.

- **Creative Camps** immerse children in the arts with professional arts educators guiding their experience in disciplines of drawing, painting, sculpture, and fiber arts. The upcoming sessions in June 2026 are full, with **96 children** enrolled. Scholarships were provided for every family that requested, based on need.
- **Creative Aging** partnership is being developed with the Arizona Commission in the Arts to offer programming opportunities for older adults.

### Arts Leadership

- **Professional Development Workshop Series for Artists & Creatives:** With a focus on Creative Workforce Development, this year we offered free professional development workshops on **4 new topics** to prepare artists for professional arts and cultural opportunities reaching over **300 participants**, with paid professionals serving as workshop presenters: *Marketing & AI for Artists & Creatives*; *Managing Web Presence for Artists, Creatives & Non-Profits*; *Board Basics + Bylaws, Roles, Development and Succession Planning*; and *Diversifying Funding, Partnerships & Tax Awareness for Artists & Nonprofits*.
- **Cultural Convenings:** Facilitation of **3 community meetings** to date in FY26 built partnerships with other local non-profit organizations for collaborative programming on entrepreneurship and topics such as: *Strengthening Arts, Science & Culture Collaboration through Shared Networks*; *ArtWalk Visioning* and *Calendar Alignment for Arts, Science & Culture*.
- **Artist Registry:** Grew and maintained a regional artist registry as a networking opportunity for Visual Artists, Performing Artists, Literary Artists, and Artisans in Flagstaff, and as a resource for businesses and venues to host artists for ArtWalk.

### Events & Activations

- **ARTx Art + Ideas Experience**, an annual, accessible community opportunity to engage with the arts in an immersive and interactive way, expanded in FY26 with:
  - **6 ARTx Engagements** year aligned with the ArtWalk season
  - **3-day Multimedia Art Experience** transforming Flagstaff into an Immersive Art Experience with over 22 artist activations.
- **ArtWalk** revitalization:
  - Implementation and oversight of ArtWalk map, listings, website, and marketing with new digital format for increased accessibility
  - Free listings and expanded footprint for business and studios to incentivize participation
  - Enhanced offerings in Heritage Square
- **Satellite Venues:** 1 fulltime satellite venue, and temporary pop-ups aligned with ArtWalk and ARTx were featured in FY26.

## Creative Flagstaff Grant Making Agency

Reflecting focus of scope of \$66,000 ongoing and additional one-time \$45,000 grant administration and \$440,000 ongoing and additional one-time \$300,000 passthrough grant funding.

- **FY26 General Operating Support Grants:** \$490k awarded to 39 projects out of 43 applications.
- **2026 Project Grants in Innovation and Capacity Building:** \$125k awarded to 16 projects out of 35 applications, 5 of which were first-time applicants. *This is the most applications ever received Project Grants, almost double from last year, showing an increased need for funding.*
- **ARTx & Events:** \$125k awarded to 22 projects out of 47 applications.
- **FY27 General Operating Support Grants:** 44 applications are currently in review.

## Integrated Grants Program

- Overhauled Arts & Science Project Grant and General Operating Support Application and Process for applicant and panelist efficiency and accessibility.
- Integration of Grantmaking into programmatic areas by offering ongoing professional development opportunities targeted to grant processes, supporting mentorship for applicants, and fostering long-term relationships to track, support, and showcase grantee projects.
- All funding opportunities are advertised through multiple platforms including but not limited to Creative Flagstaff newsletters, dedicated grant announcement email list, social media, and listed on DataArts and other grant funding partner platforms such as Arizona Commission on the Arts.
- Selection Process: Project and GOS Grants are awarded through a competitive review process. Creative Flagstaff's Grantmaking Committee is a volunteer committee comprised of 7 Arts & Science professionals in FY26 residing in greater Flagstaff, including at least one representative of the City of Flagstaff and one Creative Flagstaff Board Member. The committee reads, reviews, and ranks all applications based on the criteria listed in the above application questions and determines funding allocations from the City of Flagstaff Art & Science BBB Funds. Then the Grant Committee makes a funding recommendation to the Creative Flagstaff Board for approval.
- Applications are scored against the following four criteria areas:
  1. Alignment: mission statement and organizational structure of the organization and describe the community served, including the mission and vision of the organization; organizational structure (Board, staff, volunteers, etc.); programs or services that reflect the organization's mission.
  2. Impact: public benefit of the organization's programs to the residents of Flagstaff, and how the organization responds to the community's interests through art, science, and/or cultural programming, community reach, demographics, and number of individuals served, including programming goals and outcome, marketing and outreach strategies, methods for evaluation,

3. **Resiliency & Sustainability:** the organization's strategy to sustain its programming and operational capacity, including short-term priorities for programming (1-year), longer-term strategy for sustainability growth (3+ years), and organization's management and oversight, including financial, strategic, and succession planning.
  4. **Financials:** expand on any Alternative Budget Form/DataArts Funder Report lines that need clarification, including unexpected gains or losses over the last 3 completed fiscal years, and any financial changes anticipated within the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Additional Questions:** to help applicants be successful in their applications, we offer the opportunity for the committee to generate additional questions if needed. These additional questions provide reviewers with more detail. Creative Flagstaff staff forward the reviewer's additional questions, along with instructions, to the applicant via Submittable messaging.
  - **Final Report:** produced by the grant recipient and Creative Flagstaff for passthrough funds to ensure all requirements have been met.

### **ARTx & Events**

Applications are reviewed by a panel of 3 City of Flagstaff, CF Board, and community representatives. Project criteria are arts & science focused, unique experience, community engagement, impact, sound budget, and feasible timeline. After individual review of 47 applications by each of the panelists and a group session, 16 projects were funded in full by meeting these criteria.

### **Grantmaking and Nonprofit Educational Component**

- **4 new topics prepared over 300 participants** for arts and cultural opportunities and the Arts & Science grant program:
  - **Digital Marketing and AI for Nonprofits** Explore how nonprofits can leverage marketing strategies and AI tools to enhance outreach, engagement, and efficiency. Led by artist and designer Kayley Quick and marketing professional and theater leader Caitlin Burd, this session will provide practical insights on branding, content creation, and the evolving role of AI in nonprofit marketing. Whether you're looking to streamline operations or strengthen your organization's presence, this workshop will offer valuable takeaways for nonprofit leaders and creatives alike.
  - **Managing Web Presence for Artists, Creatives & Nonprofits** Explore approachable strategies to boost visibility across key platforms and connect with the people and audiences who matter most.
  - **Board Basics + Bylaws, Roles, Development and Succession Planning** Focus on roles and responsibilities, what to expect as a Board Member, recruiting and cultivating new board members, overall organization structure, policies and procedures, and strategic and succession planning.
  - **Diversifying Funding, Partnerships & Tax Awareness for Artists & Nonprofits** Introduction to diversified funding strategies; how individual artists can

collaborate with 501(c)(3) organizations through fiscal sponsorships; and exploration of a range of funding opportunities, and strategic partnerships. Includes essentials of federal tax code for grant recipients.