San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge FAQ Sheet

What is the San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge?

The San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge is a community initiative to help stabilize the creative sector, save jobs, and lessen financial losses due to COVID-19.

The Challenge was established by a group of arts, government and philanthropy leaders, who came together to leverage $1.2 million in initial funding from San Diego Foundation and the City of San Diego to raise funds countywide and reach a goal of $2 million.

The Challenge includes:

**Initial Funding:** $1 million from the City of San Diego and $200,000 from the San Diego Foundation.

**The City of San Diego Funds:** direct acquisition of recently completed artwork by local artists and direct commission of artwork by local artists (see details at bottom).

**The Challenge Fund:** housed at the San Diego Foundation and seeded with $200,000 ($100,000 from the Creative Catalyst Program and $100,000 from arts and culture funds).

**The Challenge Fund Campaign:** an initiative to raise another $800,000 for grants to support the non-profit arts and culture sector, in particular the creative workforce employed by non-profit arts and culture organizations countywide.

**The Challenge Fund Grants:** will range from $1,500 to $10,000 and provide one-time, emergency relief payments to nonprofit arts and culture organizations throughout the County. Funds will help groups retain their pool of creative workers – both salaried and independent contractors - and assist with other overhead costs to keep our creative workforce employed.

Why Now? The arts and culture sector is the single hardest hit sector among non-profits in the county. Before Covid-19, the arts and culture sector was already among the least capitalized and most financially vulnerable. Today, our creative workforce are among the most at risk of losing work now and in the coming months.
A study completed by the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture in 2015 evidenced that the City of San Diego’s nonprofit arts and culture sector alone is a significant industry — one that generates $1.1 billion in total economic activity. It also supports 35,914 full-time equivalent jobs. Whether on stage or working backstage, in the orchestra pit or in the galleries, these are the jobs at risk that we must work to save.

COVID-19 has turned all our lives upside down, which is especially true for San Diego’s creative workforce. Research conducted by the University of San Diego’s Nonprofit Institute found that 41% of arts and culture organizations are not operating programs because of the virus; a majority don’t expect to operate programs in the next 4 to 8 weeks; and, only 39% expect to fully fund payroll over the next month leaving hundreds of creative workers without income to sustain their livelihoods.

Yet, without the revenue traditionally earned through admissions or ticket sales, cultural institutions don’t have the money to help creative workers adapt to these digital platforms and create new and high-quality programming our audiences deserve.

According to the recently released Nonprofit Sector Response to COVID-19 survey by the University of San Diego’s Nonprofit Institute, the Arts and Culture sector is the hardest hit of all nonprofit sections in San Diego County.

- 41% of arts and culture organizations are not operating programs
- A majority don’t expect to operate programs in the next 4 to 8 weeks
- Only 39% expect to fully fund payroll over the next 4 weeks
- As the crisis continues, the number of arts and culture organizations that can fully fund payroll over 8 weeks drops to 19%

Who Can Participate?

*Foundations, corporations and government agencies* can join the *Challenge* by making a financial contribution directly to the *Challenge Fund* or by identifying new funds specifically for the arts and culture sector and directly distributing grants to artists and arts organizations countywide.

*Individuals* can donate directly to *The Challenge Fund*.

Who should donate to the Challenge Fund?

*Anyone who cares about the arts in San Diego County.* All funds raised go to non-profit arts and culture organizations to support and retain their creative workforce. *
*if you already have a favorite arts organization you want to donate directly to, do it! The Challenge is here to support and expand the generosity of San Diegans – not duplicate efforts.

**How can you donate?**

Online at: [CHALLENGE](#)

Send checks to:
The San Diego Foundation  
**Attn:** San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund  
2508 Historic Decatur Rd., Ste. 200  
San Diego, CA 92106  
Please include on the subject line: “San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund”

To wire or transfer funds, contact The San Diego Foundation’s Giving Team at 619-814-1332 or stewardship@sdfoundation.org. Please make sure to designate your gift for the "Arts + Culture Challenge Fund."

**Where will the funds be held and managed?**

Donations made through the Classy online fundraising platform are directly linked to the San Diego Foundation. The San Diego Foundation will process grant checks to the organizations. Occasionally an organization may receive their check from an outside foundation Challenge partner.

**What is the grant review process?**

Final granting decisions will be made by a subset of steering committee members who do not have conflicts due to their or their family member’s employment or board service with an applying organization.

Phase 1: May 1st open applications for small and mid-sized organizations with budgets between $150,000 and $1.5M. Applications due by May 15th, grants announced by May 22nd.

Fundraising will be ongoing. Subsequent phases will be determined by available funding. Applicants may receive support only once.
If I give a donation may I decide which nonprofit will receive my grant monies?

No. The steering committee subset will be making all final funding decisions. This is an opportunity for you to join others in having an even greater collective impact with your gift to help save the arts & culture ecosystem in San Diego County. If you have a favorite organization, we encourage you to give directly to them as well as to the San Diego Arts + Culture Challenge Fund.

How will the City of San Diego funds be used to support the Challenge and where are the funds coming from?

The City has two initiatives that are part of the overall Challenge but not imbedded within the Challenge Fund. These initiatives are designed to direct funds to individual artists and will be decided upon by the San Diego Arts and Culture Commission.

SD Practice/Art from Local Artists: To keep San Diego artists working, the City of San Diego has identified $500,000 to acquire new or recently completed artwork by San Diego artists to expand and diversify the City’s collection. This initiative has been made possible through a contribution made by contemporary artist Thomas O. Rasmussen. Rasmussen, who died in 2014, wished to support the public display of artworks to the widest range of the public possible. Further details on the acquisition process will be available by May 15 on the City website under Commission for Arts & Culture.

Temporary Art: $500,000 will be available to area artists to produce temporary, ephemeral or performative public art in public spaces such as beaches, parks and plazas. As San Diego re-opens, the City will engage artists as part of the “welcome “back” to public space. These funds came from repurposed monies generated from developer fees and a family bequest. Further details on the application process will be posted by May 15 on the City website under Commission for Arts & Culture.

Who is spearheading the Challenge?

It has been launched by a steering committee of local artists, arts leaders and advocates.

www.SanDiegoRACC.org    SanDiegoRACC@gmail.com
Arts + Culture Challenge Steering Committee

Alan Ziter – Past Co-Chair, San Diego Regional Arts & Culture Coalition
Alex Goodman - Secretary, North County Philanthropy Council
Felicia Shaw - Interim Executive Director, Women’s Museum of California
Jill Hall – Chair of The San Diego Foundation Creative Catalyst Program
Jonathon Glus – Executive Director, City of San Diego Commission for Arts & Culture
Lee Ann Kim - Founder, Pacific Arts Movement
Lynnette Tessitore - Co-Chair, San Diego Regional Arts & Culture Coalition
Matt Carney – Co-Chair, San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition
Matt D’Arrigo – Director of Creative Youth Development, The Clare Rose Foundation
Susanna Peredo Swap - Founder & Executive Director, Vanguard Culture
Toni Robin – Principal, TR/PR Public Relations & Marketing
Victoria Hamilton – President, Californians for the Arts

If you have further questions regarding the Challenge Fund or Challenge Grants, please contact: San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition sandiegoracc@gmail.com.

If you have further questions regarding the City of San Diego opportunities, please contact: arts@sandiego.gov.