

Memorandum

TO: ARTS COMMISSION

FROM: Paul Krutko

**SUBJECT: PROJECT MINI-GRANT
GUIDELINE REVISIONS**

DATE: 08-31-07

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Programs Committee's recommendation that the Office of Cultural Affairs allocate \$20,000 from unallocated Arts Grant funds in the Arts Commission's recommended FY 2007-08 arts budget to fund an additional two test rounds of Project Mini-Grants, with the changes to guidelines described herein.

BACKGROUND

In its program budget recommendations for FY2006-07, the Arts Commission included a recommendation that an unallocated sum of \$21,150 in projected Transient Occupancy Tax revenues (TOT) be used to offer small grants to support arts projects.

In December 2006, the Arts Commission recommended guidelines (attached) for the OCA to use in making a test offering of the small grants, known as Project Mini-Grants (PMG). The guidelines, which had been developed with the support of the Programs Committee, established the PMG to support grassroots and neighborhood cultural participation, especially through small-scale arts projects delivered by very small arts groups, as well as neighborhood and other community organizations. Grants ranging between \$1,000 and \$4,000 were to be offered on a bi-monthly basis as long as funds were available.

OCA accepted two rounds of applications, once in February and once in April, before exhausting the available funds. A total of seven grants were awarded, two in the first round and five in the second. Grant award details are attached.

Following the two rounds of awards, the staff members and Arts Commissioner Aarti Awasthi, who were involved in the review of grant applications, drew on their experiences and observations in order to provide feedback to the PMG administrator for possible changes to guidelines and administrative procedures.

CHANGES AND ANALYSIS

Acting on the feedback from the staff and Arts Commissioner Awasthi, a number of changes to several elements of the PMG guidelines were developed. These were reviewed with the Programs Committee at its August meeting, and the Committee voted to recommend that OCA proceed with the changes.

***Change:* Revise the eligibility requirements as follows: 1) lower the number of required previous arts activities from two to one; and 2) update specific-year references in the overlapping-grant requirement so that they refer to the current-year, instead of FY 2006-07, and the subsequent year, instead of FY 2007-08, while providing that applicants for Operating Grants (OpG), Project & Program Grants (PPG) or Festival, Parade & Celebration grants in the subsequent year are eligible *if* their PMG projects will be completed by the end of the City's current fiscal year**

Enquiries during the first two PMG rounds indicated that the requirement that eligible applicants must have completed at least two publicly accessible arts activities in the 12 months prior to the application deadline might cause the exclusion of some groups that were otherwise exactly the kind of very small or neighborhood-based groups that PMG was most intended to reach. Amending this requirement will allow OCA to test the validity of that supposition.

The second part of the change adjusts specific-year references that were appropriate to the original two rounds but would be obsolete for the proposed additional rounds.

***Change:* Revise application deadlines from the first non-holiday Monday of every other month to the first Monday in November and January**

As only two additional rounds are proposed as part of this test implementation of PMG, this change specifies the two application deadlines.

***Change:* Weight the evaluation criteria as follows: Project Quality, 40 percent; Community Impact, 40 percent; Implementation, 20 percent; and re-name Implementation to Budget & Resources**

The guidelines originally left the weighting of the evaluation criteria to the review panel, comprised of two OCA staff and one Arts Commissioner. This change codifies the weighting agreed by the review panel.

Re-naming Implementation to Budget & Resources more accurately captures the key elements included in this evaluation criterion.

***Change:* Re-state the first key element of the Community Impact evaluation criterion as, "Extent to which project facilitates grassroots or neighborhood cultural participation"**

The first key element of Community Impact, as originally stated in the guidelines, is, "Character (nature) of community participation in the activity." Re-stating the key element as described more clearly aligns the interpretation of Community Impact with the stated purpose of the PMG.

Change: Revise the 50-50 grant disbursement stipulation to 80-20

Experience from the first two rounds suggests that receiving only half of the grant award as an advance payment increased the challenge that some very small grantees faced in funding the start of their projects. Staff believes that an 80-20 disbursement — 80 percent of the grant award as an advance payment, 20 percent after the completion of the final report — may substantially alleviate this challenge. Furthermore, the 80-20 disbursement is the standard for all PPG awards and most OpG awards.

Change: Add a stipulation that no more than 25 percent of a PMG award may be used as a fiscal sponsor fee

In keeping with the intent of the PMG, the guidelines explicitly provide for applications from non-501(c)3 groups that apply with a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor. However, the guidelines are silent as to how much of a grant award a fiscal sponsor can take as its administrative fee. This change closes that gap in the guidelines.

Budget Allocation

The Arts Commission's recommended FY 2007-2008 arts budget included \$245,535 in a line item called *Arts Grant allocation not awarded*. Staff proposes to allocate \$20,000 of that line item for PMG. Staff believes that another two application rounds, with the small changes to guidelines described above, will enhance the data set for a fuller evaluation of the PMG.

In addition to the PMG recommendation, \$60,217 has already been allocated for the Operating Grant (OpG) award to Mexican Heritage Corporation, leaving a balance of \$165,318.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

OCA staff presented the changes it proposed to the Programs Committee at its publicly noticed regular meeting August 16.


PAUL KRUTKO
Chief Development Officer

Project Mini-Grants Original Guidelines

Purpose

- ◆ Support grassroots and neighborhood cultural participation, especially through small-scale arts projects delivered by
 - ◆ Very small arts groups — formal and informal
 - ◆ Neighborhood organizations
 - ◆ Other community organizations

Grant Availability

- ◆ Max: \$4,000
- ◆ Min: \$1,000
 - ◆ Up to 100% of direct costs for groups with annual budget of \$50,000 or less; 50% of direct costs for larger groups
 - ◆ Funds available: more than \$21,000
 - ◆ Offered until funds run out

Eligible Projects

- ◆ An arts or cultural heritage workshop (single or multi-session)
- ◆ A community mural project
- ◆ A performance or set of performances of the same music, theater, dance, etc. production
- ◆ An art or cultural heritage exhibition
- ◆ A literary arts reading
- ◆ A neighborhood arts or cultural heritage festival or celebration
- ◆ Event budget should be no more than \$10,000

Eligible Groups

- ◆ Must have offered at least two publicly accessible arts activities in San Jose in the 12 months preceding the application deadline
- ◆ Must have 501(c)3 tax-exempt status or be the project of

a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor

- ◆ Must be in compliance with requirements of any previous grant received through OCA
- ◆ Must not have a FY 2006-2007 OpG, PPG or FPC grant or be applying for a FY 2007-2008 OpG, PPG or FPC grant

Application

- ◆ Loosely modeled on the OrgDev grant application
 - ◆ Cover Form
 - ◆ Narrative
 - ◆ Budget
 - ◆ Financial Actuals
 - ◆ Supporting materials (optional)
- ◆ Applications accepted first non-holiday Monday of every other month until funds are exhausted
- ◆ Begin in February 2007 (anticipated)

Evaluation Criteria

- ◆ Project Quality
 - ◆ Thoughtfulness and thoroughness of planning
 - ◆ Demonstrated commitment to quality and creativity
 - ◆ Qualifications of key personnel
- ◆ Community Impact
 - ◆ Character (nature) of community participation in the activity
 - ◆ Planned service to a specific neighborhood or an underserved community
 - ◆ Appropriate plans for reaching participants
- ◆ Implementation
 - ◆ Logic and reasonableness of the project budget
 - ◆ Basic financial health of the group
 - ◆ Demonstrated access to resources (finance and people) for the project

Application Evaluation

- ◆ Program Officer reviews for eligibility
- ◆ Staff team + 1 commissioner evaluate applications and recommends grant awards
- ◆ Director approves grant awards
- ◆ Reported to Programs Committee after each cycle

Disbursements & Reports

- ◆ 50-50 disbursement
 - ◆ Up front (50 percent of grant)
 - ◆ After completion report (50 percent of grant)
- ◆ Grantee reports
 - ◆ Completion report only, if project time-frame is six months or less
 - ◆ Progress and completion, if longer

Project Mini-Grants

Mini-grants for arts projects, awarded FY 2006-07

African American Drama Company (fiscally sponsored by the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose) — The production of two family-oriented performances at the Children's Discovery Museum, focused on African-American culture and featuring youth: 1) four performances of a musical theater production about Kwanzaa in November 2007; and; 2) and four performances of "Can I Speak for You Brother?" in February 2008.

Grant Award: **\$3,000**

Cambodian American Resource Agency, the **Cambodian Cultural Dance Group** — Weekly lessons and practices for a core group of 20 dancers on Fridays beginning after July 1, 2007 and a free New Year's event of Cambodian culture at the Tully Branch Library in April 2008.

Grant Award: **\$4,000**

Catalyst for Youth, Inc. — the Heart of Chaos Artisan Collective Chalk Art Festival in three different neighborhood parks on the last Saturdays in June, July, and August 2007.

Grant Award: **\$3,970**

Jaliya, Inc. — The showcasing of African-American history and culture through a presentation of African-American folk tales, crafts, percussion and dance at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library on October 27, 2007.

Grant Award: **\$1,500**

Public Affairs Department 90.5 FM KSJS (fiscally sponsored by Associated Students of San Jose State University) — The presentation of performances of blues music and a panel of blues artists as part of San Jose Blues Week from May 7 through May 13, 2007.

Grant Award: **\$1,200**

Tezkatlipoka Aztec Dance (fiscally sponsored by MACLA) — The production of the Quetzalcoatl Aztec Dance Festival celebrating Pre-Columbian music, dance and culture in downtown San Jose on May 19 and 20, 2007

Grant Award: **\$3,450**

Twilight Senior Theater (fiscally sponsored by the Korean American Senior Citizens Association) — The production of a fully-staged play entitled *Wedding Day*, featuring seniors aged 60 to 80 years on October 27, 2007 at the San Jose City College Theater.

Grant Award: **\$4,000**