

From: ["Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)
To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)
Date: 11/15/2021 9:10:26 AM
Subject: Upcoming news release: \$2.25 million for Culture Grants (November 16, 2021)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release on Tuesday, November 16, pending Council approval, announcing a \$2.25 million investment into the arts and culture sector, as part of our dedicated effort to deliver on [Culture|Shift](#). Highlights include the Cultural Equity Grants, Vancouver Music Fund and Artist Studio Awards Program.

There will be corresponding video case studies featuring Equity Grants recipients posted on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and I encourage you to share them on your channels.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
News release
November 16, 2021

City invests \$2.25 million in elevating and celebrating the cultural diversity of Vancouver

Today Vancouver City Council approved over \$2.25 million in grants for 106 non-profit cultural organizations and seven local artists, who will receive live-work or work-only studios at below-market rents to support their work. This investment will make space for arts and culture in Vancouver, support equity-seeking artists and increase industry stability through and beyond the pandemic.

Artists and cultural creators from equity-seeking communities, including Indigenous, Black, people of colour and people with disabilities face many barriers to full participation in the cultural sector. [The City's 10 year Culture|Shift](#) strategy recognizes that these barriers have historically resulted in underrepresentation in the creation of arts and culture works and experiences in the city, including those

supported by City grants.

“As part of our dedicated efforts to deliver on Culture|Shift, our community informed culture plan, we are actively applying an intersectional, decolonial, racial justice, and systemic equity lens to our grant programs. Looking at equity as both an outcome and a process is a key part of the City’s new Equity Framework.” said Branislav Henselmann, Managing Director of Cultural Services for City of Vancouver. “These Council-approved investments reflect our continuous commitment to uplift the contributions of a broader range of artists who make Vancouver a world renowned cultural hub.”

“Marginalized and equity-seeking groups are used to hearing that our ideas, practices, processes and work don’t fit into existing structures - whether within a creative genre or a funding program,” said Debi Wong, Founding Artistic Director of [re:Naissance Opera](#) and Cultural Equity Grant recipient. “The City Of Vancouver Cultural Equity Grant was the first opportunity re:Naissance Opera has had to determine how funding could best serve our ideas for new processes and practices that lift up and celebrate the integral work of marginalized and equity seeking artists in our community.”

Grant highlights

This investment is funded through a number of new and existing programs that advance the City’s cultural goals. Below is a selection of key highlights. The complete report is available online.

□ Cultural Equity Grants

Launched in 2020 to achieve greater equity, this program lowers barriers to access to core operating support for equity-denied artists and groups. Through the Cultural Equity Grants, the City endeavors to create a positive process of information exchange and support through an invitation-based, non-competitive process that builds connection and honours the deep knowledge held within the organization and its people.

Recipients of Cultural Equity Grants include:

- [Afro Van Connect](#) received \$45,000 in Equity and Capacity building grants to support their work empowering people of African Descent through conversation, collaboration, creation & performance. Afro Van Connect creates Black spaces and gatherings of vibrant, creative minds committed to developing authentic solutions, to increase the visibility of unserved communities.
- Open Access Foundation for Arts and Culture (OAFAC) received \$25,000 to advance their work setting a new cultural standard for accessibility by nurturing creative and justice-oriented accessibility practices in the cultural sector. OAFAC advances disability culture and artistry within a contemporary art context through disability-lead trainings, curation, public engagements, exhibitions, performances, educational campaigns and site-specific project development with artists, curators and cultural workers.
- [Punjabi Market Regeneration Collective Society](#) received \$20,000 to continue their work revitalizing the historic ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਮਾਰਕੀਟ (Punjabi Market) by beautifying the market, developing and promoting businesses and creating a hub for arts and culture.
- The [Vancouver Asian Film Festival \(VAFF\)](#), which celebrated its 25th anniversary this month, received \$25,000. VAFF promotes and celebrates the diversity and depth of Asian culture and identity in film and media and helps North American Asian actors and filmmakers define and express themselves on screen. The 11-day festival highlights an array of unique and outstanding talent, with Asian Canadian and Asian American writers, producers, and directors showcasing their latest work.

□ Vancouver Music Fund

\$300,000 is granted to [Creative BC](#), to renew the Vancouver Music Fund. Established in 2019 to

implement the [Vancouver Music Strategy](#), the Fund, the first of its kind in Canada, provides direct support to Indigenous and underrepresented musicians, artists, and groups working in Vancouver's music sector.

□ **Artist Studio Awards Program**

Seven Vancouver-based artists who are Indigenous and/or racialized have been awarded live-work, or work-only studios at below-market rates for terms of approximately three years. The artists were selected based on eligibility, cultural practice, peer recognition and impact. [Visit our website to learn more about the Artist Studio Awards Program](#) and the selected artists.

Cultural vitality is critical to the City's identity, liveability, economic prosperity, social cohesion, and sense of environmental responsibility. The City of Vancouver invests close to \$16M in grants to local arts and culture non-profit organizations each year to support operations, major and small capital projects, and capital planning.