

From: ["van Dyk, Donny"](#)

To: ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)

Date: 1/20/2026 5:10:16 PM

Subject: Upcoming news release: Council invests more than \$5.6 million in cultural grants to strengthen Vancouver's arts and culture sector

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Dear Mayor and Council,

The City will be issuing the below news release regarding \$5.6 million in cultural grants to strengthen the arts and culture sector, following Council's approval today.

Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account.

CEC will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live.

Thanks,  
Donny

Donny van Dyk (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x̱m̱ ḵ y̱ m̱ (Musqueam), S̱ wxw̱ú7mesh (Squamish), and s̱ lilw̱ ta̱ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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News Release  
City of Vancouver  
January 20, 2026

Vancouver invests more than \$5.6 million in cultural grants to strengthen arts and culture sector



*Image: Quelemia Sparrow who received a CASC grant in partnership with Aphotic Theatre. Photo by Emily Cooper*

Today, Vancouver City Council approved more than \$5.6 million in cultural grants to support artists and cultural organizations. The funding includes \$5,609,000 in grants and \$61,598 in in-kind contributions to 165 organizations as part of the first-round of 2026 grant allocations.

"These are important investments in Vancouver's cultural future," said Mayor Ken Sim. "By supporting local artists, cultural organizations and arts and culture spaces, we're proud to be delivering a more fun and vibrant city."

The grants were the result of a rigorous staff and peer-driven assessment process. They cover several different programs, including:

- **Communities and Artists Shifting Culture (CASC):** \$500,000 in project-based grants to 65 arts and cultural organizations across Vancouver to support a wide range of creative projects that contribute to Vancouver's rich cultural fabric.
- **Cultural Operating Funding:** \$2.4 million in advance and multi-year grants to support the operations of 97 cultural organizations in delivering programs and services for artists, the cultural community and the public. Operating grants advance the [Culture/Shift](#) goal of putting arts and culture at the centre of city-building and support cultural and economic vibrancy.
- **Making Space for Arts and Culture Capital Grant:** \$2,665,000 to the Eastside Arts Society to support the purchase of its long-standing home at 716 East Hastings Street, securing nearly 6,000 sq. ft. of affordable artist studio and cultural programming space. This strategic investment strengthens the Eastside Arts Society—a cornerstone of Vancouver's arts community and organizer of the annual Eastside Culture Crawl—protecting creative spaces in an area facing rapid displacement.

#### Funding highlights

- [Blue Cabin Cooperative](#): \$10,000 to support Indigenous Artist-in-Residence and Mentorship programming.
- [Other Sights for Artists' Association](#): \$4,008 in-kind grant to support a FLEET mobile artist studio in

- Vanier Park.
- [Vancouver Pride Society](#): \$7,000 to support East Side Pride.

To learn more, read the full council report here: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20260120/documents/r2.pdf>

Each year, the City of Vancouver awards nearly 500 grants totaling more than \$16 million to support arts and culture projects and organizations.

Arts and culture grants support Council's strategic priority to build a vibrant, diverse and culturally rich city. The arts and culture grants program aligns with the City's [10-year culture plan](#), the associated [cultural infrastructure plan](#), and advances the City's Reconciliation, Equity, Healthy City and Accessibility goals.

The distribution and impact of cultural grant streams and other grants are reported through the [City of Vancouver's annual Grant Impact Report](#).

What our community partners are saying

"We are profoundly grateful to the City of Vancouver for making this strategic investment in the arts possible. Securing our home means securing the future of hundreds of artists who rely on affordable studio space. This funding is a game-changer for the Eastside arts community and ensures creativity continues to thrive in Vancouver for decades to come. As we celebrate our 30th year as a Society, this support is an extraordinary way to mark such an important milestone." Esther Rausenberg, Eastside Arts Society

"This funding allows us to continue centering and amplifying the voices of IBPOC women and artists, sharing stories that reflect the diverse realities of our city while taking creative risks that push form and imagination. Together, we are building a vibrant cultural landscape where artists and communities connect, feel seen and create meaningful change." Fay Nass, Aphotic Theatre

"Thanks to the City of Vancouver for investing in the soul of our city. This support allows us to create spaces for dialogue, imagination and connection—things Vancouver needs now more than ever. We look forward to continuing this work alongside the City ensuring literature and storytelling remain central to Vancouver's cultural identity." Ian Gill, Upstart & Crow Literary Arts Society

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