



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 6, 2023

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

FROM: JAMES B. SPENGLER, DIRECTOR
RECREATION, PARKS, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of an Art Project Grant Application to the National Endowment for the Arts to Support Commemorative Arts Programs.

ISSUE: Consideration of an Art Project Grant Application to the National Endowment for the Arts to Support Commemorative Arts Programs.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the grant application request of \$75,000 for the Arts Program Grant to the National Endowment for the Arts; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager and staff to execute the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: Annually, the Office of the Arts, a division of the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Department, identifies grant-funded opportunities to implement the goals outlined in the City Council approved Arts and Culture Master Plan ("Plan"): achieve equity, inclusion and access for arts, cultural, and creative endeavors; facilitate opportunities for innovation and collaboration; support and foster a sustainable and diverse community of the arts; and be a convener and facilitator for artistic and cultural expression.

Twice a year, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) invites arts organizations throughout the country to submit applications for their Arts Project Grant. For the past two years, the Office of the Arts successfully secured a \$30,000 Arts Project Grant to bring arts programs and events to traditionally underserved areas in Alexandria and a \$45,000 grant for artist residencies that will occur throughout the city this Summer and Fall.

The Office of the Arts is eligible to apply for another NEA Arts Project grant to support art programs occurring between June 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025. Applications are due July 6, 2023, with award notice in April 2024.

DISCUSSION: In 2024, the City of Alexandria will celebrate the 275th anniversary of its founding. Commemorative events are planned to celebrate the city's past, present, and future. The NEA Arts Project grant, if awarded, will fund a grant program that will be eligible to non-profit organizations to create art programs that celebrate the rich heritage of the city and its neighborhoods. Grant awards will range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 with no cash match for programs that occur between June 2024 and March 2025. The art programs will be representational of the city's demographics, neighborhoods, and creative communities and could include neighborhood celebrations, ethnic and culturally centric creative expressions, youth or intergenerational programs, storytelling, and traditional or contemporary art programs.

Initial key collaborating partner organizations are Visit Alexandria, the Office of Historic Alexandria, and the Alexandria Arts Alliance. The partners will help to implement the NEA Arts Project grant, promote the availability of the commemorative arts grant program, and help promote the art programs. Additional partners will be identified as the planning efforts continue.

FISCAL IMPACT: The National Endowment for the Arts Art Project grant award requires a one-to-one cash match. The Office of the Arts intends to use already appropriated city funds for the cash match and other expenses relating to this grant award.

STAFF:

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Cheryl Anne Colton, Regional Program Director, Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities