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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Next Level Grants Available for Sonoma County Musicians**

*New Funds Made Available by the Hewlett Foundation*

SONOMA COUNTY, Calif. -- Creative Sonoma is pleased to announce the availability of five \$2,500 grants for Sonoma County's musicians. The grant program is the second phase of the Next Level music industry showcase and concert produced in Santa Rosa April 15-17, 2016, in partnership with the North Bay Hootenanny.

Grants are available for musicians and bands to help them do what it takes to move their careers to the next level. Grants will be paired with ten hours of one-on-one consulting with music industry experts to help encourage the most effective use of the grant funds.

"Sonoma County is home to a remarkable music scene full of passionate artists who are working hard to make a living through music," said Supervisor Efren Carrillo, Chair of the Board of Supervisors. "The Next Level program was conceived to help them do that through performance opportunities, education, and now financial resources. We understand that touring is a critical part of the music ecosystem, and we are certain that our musicians will be great ambassadors for Sonoma County."

Next Level is building on the strong spirit of community that exists in the County. The day-long conference with music pros was a great grounding in the the fundamentals of establishing a career in the industry. Next Level grants are designed to be a catalyst for five local musicians or bands to accelerate their careers beyond what they might be able to achieve on their own. The deadline for applications is **June 6, 2016**.

An applicant Q&A session is scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, at 1:00 pm at the Creative Sonoma offices at 141 Stony Circle, Suite 110, Santa Rosa. Applicants may also dial in to the call at 707.565.8996.

Grant guidelines outlining eligibility and application forms are available at <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/edb/>.

For more information, please contact Kristen Madsen at [kristen.madsen@sonoma-county.org](mailto:kristen.madsen@sonoma-county.org).

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