Creative Sonoma’s mission is to support and advance the creative community of Sonoma County. We define the creative community as individuals, organizations, and businesses whose work is centered in creativity.

It is our vision that creativity become a defining characteristic of Sonoma County alongside wine, food, and natural beauty.

Our core values are excellence, engagement, and equity.
Looking Back

2017-18, Creative Sonoma’s fourth year of existence, will forever be marked with the asterisk that the fires have imposed on our collective experience—challenges that we are all still sifting through. Early on, Creative Sonoma recognized that the arts would have a unique role to play in our community’s recovery—that artists are our Second Responders.

A section of this report is dedicated to our efforts to participate in the rebuilding of our community’s heart and soul while laying out a safety net of critical services to the individual members of the creative community. While there are many lessons learned through this wrenching experience that can be applied even in the best of times, it is our sincere hope that we won’t soon have to draw upon that new knowledge.

Meeting face to face, looking into each other’s eyes to ground ourselves in our recovery became an important element of our work in 2017–18. Layered on top of our regular slate of professional development gatherings was a series of convenings of arts and cultural organizations. While focused for this year on our shared responses to the fires, the ritual of coming together quickly built its own momentum and the coalition has committed to continuing the networking gatherings into the foreseeable future.

Imagining Forward

As we begin the 2018–19 year, we are challenged to continue our growth trajectory and to strengthen and deepen our root system in our creative community. Questions we know we will face in the coming year include: who are the community members who most need the arts, and perhaps have the least access to them? How do we define, and therefore encourage creativity? If Sonoma County is proud of being a place where the arts and creativity thrive, how can we better manifest that for our residents and for visitors?

What we do know, is that in 2018–19, we will turn an eye toward expanding our visibility in the community at large, always leading with the knowledge that creativity is in us all. If we take the time to look a little more carefully, listen a little more thoughtfully, we’ll be on our way to exercising our own creative muscles.
Creative Sonoma awarded $400,715 in grants to 173 individuals, organizations and businesses in 2017-18, through seven separate categories.

This total reflects an increase over 2016-17 of 52% in total dollars and 77% in grants awarded. Our fire response grants are the largest factor in that increase, however, without that work we still increased our grant-making by 21% in total dollars and 15% in awardees.
Arts Education Innovation Grants were awarded to 14 nonprofit organizations that provide Sonoma County students, ages 2–18, with opportunities to participate in high-quality arts learning programs. Projects ranged across creative disciplines from poetry and writing to music instruction, photography, theater, crafts, filmmaking, and more. Projects were produced in a variety of venues from schools to youth centers to juvenile justice facilities. These projects will occur in 2018–19.

Grantees

Locations listed are where the predominance of the project took place.

**ART ESCAPE**
The Springs

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF CENTRAL SONOMA COUNTY**
Roseland

**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SONOMA VALLEY**
Sonoma

**CALIFORNIA POETS IN THE SCHOOLS**
Petaluma
Windsor
Roseland
The Springs
Santa Rosa

**CAZADERO PERFORMING ARTS CAMP**
Cazadero

“When I play my violin I am instantly able to channel all my emotions through the music and it makes me happy. When I feel stressed with school, I just take a moment to find a place to play and it makes me relaxed.”

—Sonoma Valley Education Foundation Valley Vibes participant

Sonoma Valley Education Foundation—Valley Vibes
CHILD PARENT INSTITUTE
Phoenix High School, Rohnert Park

CHOP'S TEEN CLUB
Santa Rosa, Roseland

FELTA EDUCATION FOUNDATION
Healdsburg

IMAGINE BUS PROJECT
Los Guilicos Juvenile Hall, Santa Rosa

LUTHER BURBANK CENTER FOR THE ARTS
Bellevue Elementary School, Santa Rosa

SONOMA COUNTY DANCERS UNITED
Windsor Unified School District

SOCO REGIONAL PARKS FOUNDATION
Santa Rosa

SONOMA VALLEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION
El Verano Elementary, Sonoma

WALKING ELEPHANT THEATRE COMPANY
Chop's Teen Center and Village Elementary, Santa Rosa
Roseland Elementary, Roseland
Credo High School, Rohnert Park
Next Level grants celebrate the musical talent and exploration occurring across the county and help local musicians move their careers forward. The program recognized five Sonoma bands and/or musicians with $2,500 grants for projects designed to advance their careers. Grantees also receive 10 hours of one-on-one consulting time with professional experts in areas that align with the applicant’s needs.

Grantees

**ALAN HALL**
Jazz • Sebastopol

**DYATRIBAL**
World Music • Sebastopol

**MANZANITA FALLS**
Indie Rock • Santa Rosa

**MARSHALL HOUSE PROJECT**
Soul-Funk • Santa Rosa

**ODDJOB ENSEMBLE**
World Music • Santa Rosa

“Sometimes, as a local musician, the hardest part isn’t always whether or not an artist is making the right decisions to further their career, but having the encouragement and confidence that the decisions they want to make are the right ones.”

—Next Level Grantee
In its third year, Summer Arts Youth Program Grants supported 12 Sonoma County creative organizations who foster creativity in local youth while giving them opportunities to maintain learning while school is out of session, as well as providing opportunities to attend high-quality cultural arts summer programs.

**Grantees**

**6TH STREET PLAYHOUSE**  
Santa Rosa

**ART ESCAPE**  
The Springs

**ARTSTART**  
Santa Rosa

**CINNABAR ARTS**  
Petaluma

**MAIN STAGE WEST**  
Sebastopol

**HEALDSBURG CENTER FOR THE ARTS**  
Healdsburg

**THE IMAGINISTS**  
Santa Rosa

**LUTHER BURBANK CENTER FOR THE ARTS**  
Santa Rosa

**PETALUMA ARTS CENTER**  
Petaluma

**SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY**  
Sheppard Accelerated Elementary, Roseland

**SONOMA CONSERVATORY OF DANCE**  
Sonoma

**SEBASTOPOL CENTER FOR THE ARTS**  
Sebastopol
BY THE NUMBERS 2018

323 ARTISTS
paid through Creative Sonoma and partners

447
Creative profiles on www.CreativeSonoma.org

458 INDIVIDUALS
attended 25 workshops and convenings

85%
of survey respondents would recommend workshops to a friend

$518,827
in revenue for the creative community

$400,715
distributed to 173 creative individuals and organizations in 11 cities and towns across the County

5,624
students received 4,116 hours of arts programming

2,125
original student poems written

67 different creative professions reached
Providing the tools to help creatives make a business from their art is a critical priority for Creative Sonoma.

In 2018, 21 workshops were hosted on a variety of topics across the county to help the creative community advance its knowledge on topics including financial and legal issues, marketing, nonprofit management, and program development.
Professional Development Workshops

**Finance and Legal Issues**
- Bookkeeping the Easy Way
- Budgeting for Cash Flow
- Income Taxes
- Legal Issues for Musicians
- Non Profit Business Structures
- Sales and Local Tax Issues
- Tax Law Changes and Charitable Giving Impact

**Marketing**
- Photographing Your Artwork: Artists and Creatives (2 sessions)
- Photographing Your Work: Architects and Interior Designers
- Selling Your Creative Work 101: Make a Plan
- Selling Your Creative Work 101: Get Tools
- Selling Your Creative Work 101: Panel and Discussion
- Wix 101: Website Development for Creatives (2 sessions)

**Nonprofit Management**
- Creative Resources Recovery Workshop
- Hiring Employees and Subcontractors
- Nimble Arts Organizations

**Program Development**
- Addressing Trauma through the Arts (2 sessions)
- Public Art and Crowdfunding

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*Tyler Chartier: Photographing Your Artwork Workshop*
Our Reach

A total of 350 attendees came from more than 16 communities across the county to workshops in five different locations:

**ATTENDEES**
- Cloverdale
- Cotati
- Forestville
- Glen Ellen
- Guerneville
- Healdsburg
- Kenwood
- Monte Rio
- Occidental
- Petaluma
- Rohnert Park
- Santa Rosa
- Sebastopol
- The Springs
- Sonoma
- Windsor

**LOCATIONS**
- Jenner
- Petaluma
- Santa Rosa
- Sebastopol
- Sonoma

One-on-one consulting services are offered for individuals and organizations who are facing a creative business challenge such as assessing the benefits and challenges of forming a nonprofit.

In conjunction with every grant offered, Creative Sonoma hosts informal sessions designed to de-mystify the process of grant writing and help potential applicants increase their ability to present their case in the best possible light. Individuals and organizations learn from staff, and from their peer cohort about how to create and measure programs of impact for the community. Additionally, Creative Sonoma hosted four gatherings of arts organizations, on a bi-monthly basis, to network and collaborate on post-fire activities.

“Learning about Creative Sonoma gives tools, possibilities and vision to an emerging artist, one that sees herself becoming a well-respected ‘established artist’ in future years.”

—Consulting Client
In January 2017, www.CreativeSonoma.org was launched as the key communications platform to share digital information and resources.

In addition to news, resources and stories, important features on the site include creative profiles where individuals, organizations, and businesses can show off who they are and what they are doing.

The site also includes the Marketplace—a “Craigslist” for creatives as well as a growing registry of the extraordinary collection of public art that lives in Sonoma County.
Community members are using the site as a source for creative work. More than 100 people responded to a call for extras for a local film shoot after it was advertised in the CreativeSonoma.org Marketplace. An artist who had recently lost everything in the fires was hired to produce summer workshops for the Sebastopol Center for the Arts after being discovered on the Creatives at Work page. And a new song was commissioned for a local film based on a connection made through the website.

CreativeSonoma.org is a growing resource to the entire community.

2018 saw the total number of Creative Profiles on CreativeSonoma.org grow from 174 to 447, an increase of 157%, and overall website traffic has increased by 250%. The number of creative genres represented by Creatives At Work profiles is more than 65.
Creative Sonoma believes that all students who want access to arts education should have access to arts education. Toward that end, Creative Sonoma supports organizations that provide arts education both in and out of school settings. Additionally, Creative Sonoma has been a partner for three years in the Arts Education Alliance (AEA), a coalition of school teachers and administrators, arts organizations, and arts education funders, who are working to assess the state of arts education in the county in order to uncover areas for improvement. Supported by a grant from the Hewlett Foundation, the AEA has conducted a survey of teachers, administrators, parents, and arts organizations on their perception of arts education in the county. The group is also incorporating information from the California Department of Education database. As the picture of the current state of affairs comes into focus, the AEA will determine a course of action to advance the goal of equity in access across the county to quality arts education.

Public Art

In 2017–18, Creative Sonoma participated in a number of public art projects and initiatives across the county. Staff served as advisors to Sonoma County Regional Parks on its process to solicit and hire artists to contribute to the Andy Lopez Unity Park. A public art workshop, focused on best practices, was presented to arts and community centers in West County in advance of a public art project that is slated to occur in 2018–19. Finally, staff also worked with Sonoma County Department of Transportation and Public Works to solicit an artist to help solve a vexing traffic problem surrounding the Laughlin Road Bridge with a unique piece of public art. The new art was installed on October 31, 2018. And Creative Sonoma has contracted with a consultant to develop a compilation of percent-for-art programs that are in place across Sonoma County and in neighboring communities in order to develop a “Best Practices” document for consideration in moving forward.
On October 12, 2017, three days after the wine country wildfires started, Creative Sonoma launched the first of what became a four-pronged response in support of the creative community.

An online network of resources for the creative community was established including listings of funders who provide emergency financial assistance specifically to members of the creative community. The list grew to include local, state, and federal resources for anyone who was impacted by the fires. Additional resources such as emergency preparedness tools for visual and performing artists and organizations were also provided.

Creative Sonoma is grateful to all of the donors to the Recovery Fund who were so generous in a moment of great need in our county. Key among those donors are the Hewlett Foundation, Redwood Credit Union, donors to the Creative Sonoma Recovery Fund, and the County of Sonoma.
Creative Sonoma Recovery Fund

Creative Sonoma established a Recovery Fund to collect and disburse donations for our local creative community. Established with just a few hundred dollars, the fund ultimately grew to $220,000 with support from foundations, individuals, and benefit events from 10 states across the country. The generosity of donors in the early days of the fires afforded us the opportunity to provide a short-term safety net to carry our artist families through their earliest moments of need. Our relief funds became the backbone of our recovery activities. As of June 30, we provided grants to 126 creative individuals and organizations totaling $159,375. Grantees were awarded up to $1,500 to use for immediate needs including food, clothing, and shelter. More than 75% of our grantees reported that their homes were a total loss and 44% lost both their homes and their studios/offices. Many of our recipients told us that our grant was the “permission” they needed to replace the tools of their trade including cameras, arts supplies, computers, and more. Our average turnaround time from application to award was under a week. Our ability to react quickly and raise early funds definitely helped provide “gap” funding for the months between the fire and a FEMA or insurance check.

“In this time of financial uncertainty, where building costs far exceed insurance payouts, it is difficult to justify spending money on photographic equipment…Applying for this grant forced me to reflect on the importance of my camera to my career, my service to others, myself, and the way I walk through life.”

—Fire Response Grantee

Christina Klauenburch art and trauma residency at Cesar Chavez Elementary
Art Response Grants for Organizations  $36,000

Creative Sonoma allocated $36,000 in existing grant funds to a “Fire Response” program for cultural organizations that were developing art projects in response to the fires. Many of these projects were designed to debut on the anniversary of the fires in October 2018. Grants were awarded to eight organizations and ranged from $3,000 to $5,000 each.

“I am very touched that so many have gone to such lengths to help ensure the continuing of creativity following a natural disaster that has affected so many artists such as myself. This grant is a symbol of hope for me.”

—Fire Response Grantee

Grantees

ART ESCAPE
The Springs

RIVERTOWN REVIVAL
Petaluma

KRCB
Rohnert Park

SANTA ROSA SYMPHONY
Rohnert Park

MUSEUMS OF SONOMA COUNTY
Santa Rosa

SONOMA VALLEY MUSEUM OF ART
Sonoma

PETALUMA ARTS CENTER
Petaluma

WALKING ELEPHANT THEATRE COMPANY
Santa Rosa

Art and Trauma Residencies for Students

In February, Creative Sonoma provided a two-day intensive training session for teaching artists to learn to use the arts specifically with students who have experienced trauma. A roster of those artists was then compiled and made available for K-12 schools and other student-serving nonprofits for residencies at no cost. During this fiscal year, 13 residencies were completed with an additional 35 scheduled to occur through Fall 2018. Teaching artists span many art genres and residency activities are widely varied. Examples include mask making where students consider who their private and public selves are and who they want them to be; interactive theater activities that help develop skills for coping when circumstances seem beyond their control; the creation of “monsterpieces” which helped students learn that understanding what frightens them can help them cope with their emotions.
Creative Sonoma is a division of the Economic Development Board, a Department of the County of Sonoma. Operating revenues, totaling $1,095,575, were provided by the County and are supplemented by other fund development activities of Creative Sonoma. Expenses, including Temporarily Restricted Funds, totaled $1,095,575. Expense categories follow IRS nonprofit organizational reporting standards.
Thank You!

Creative Sonoma Donors*

$100,000–$300,000
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation-Menlo Park,
Redwood Credit Union Community Fund

$50,000–$99,999
California Arts Council

$25,000–$49,999
California Arts Council

$1,000–$24,999
The Angora Ridge Foundation-Whitefish, MT
Beesley Family Foundation-St. George, UT
Blatt Family Foundation-Fairfield, CT
Cinnabar Theater
Morgan & Matt Devine
The Engine Is Red
Fleishhacker Foundation-San Francisco, CA
Chad Hostetler & Jay Hunsberger
Laura Lackey’s Rhythm Revue-Berkeley, CA
Living History Centre Fund
@Marin Community Foundation-Novato, CA
Cecil & Lois C. Mark-Carmichael, CA
John McGuirk
North Bay Fire Aid Concert
North Bay Artists Benefit
Patrick Rhodes Art Benefit
Sonoma Arts Live Benefit
Elisa Stancil
Stephanie Breitbard Fine Arts-San Francisco, CA
Volti San Francisco Benefit Concert-San Francisco, CA

$500–$999
A. Bright Idea Advertising and PR-Bel Air, MD
Artspace-San Francisco, CA
Zoe Brester-Pennings
Curtains Up Youth Theatre-Concord, CA
Elmhurst History Museum-Elmhurst, IL
Guitar Player Magazine “Play It Forward”
Hip-Hop United Benefit
Susan Karp & Paul Haahr-San Francisco, CA
Kristen Madsen
Petaluma Valley Rotary Club
Peter and Valerie Pustorino
The Thomas Kinkade Museum-Los Angeles, CA
Volta World Foundation-San Francisco, CA

Up To $499
Cindy A. Abbott-Pacifica, CA
Mimi Abers-Berkeley, CA
Lea Aschkenas-Fairfax, CA
Katie Baird & Michael Halsted-San Francisco, CA
Katherine Ballard-Ryan-Laporte, MN
Margaret Betchley
Bird & Beckett Benefit Event

Teresa Book & Steve Wax
Martha D. Borst
Carole Brandon-Hillsborough, NC
Wanda M. Brester
Bart Bridge
Travis Hayes Busse-San Francisco, CA
Christine Buth Furness-Brookfield, WI
Carol Ann Carollo-San Carlos, CA
Chris Chandler-Oakland, CA
Helen Cohen & Mark Lipman-San Francisco, CA
Catherine Davis
Kaitlin Decker-Woodland, CA
Ted Desmarais-San Francisco, CA
Double Shot Creative-Redwood City, CA
Steve Egelman-San Francisco, CA
Lynne Eggers-San Francisco, CA
Cathryn Fairlee
George Lawson Gallery-San Francisco, CA
Barbara Goldstein-San Jose, CA
Hot Bachata Nights Dance Community Benefit
Marsha Klein Illgen
Melissa Kaplan
Samantha Kimpel & Marc Pisan
Nancy Knoles-Anselmo, CA
Juliane & Kenton Lewis
Carol & Gordon Madsen-Salt Lake City, UT
Marin Museum of Contemporary Art-Novato, CA
Rachel Murray Meyer-San Francisco, CA
Hank Neuberger-Evanston, IL
Rich Owens-Sunnyvale, CA
Darcey Rosenblatt-Tiburon, CA
Gloria Rubio
Sarah & Ruby Design Studio-Danville, CA
Michael Schwager-Oakland, CA
John & Sandra Sebastian
Maureen A. Shea
Viki Dyan Shusterman & Ernest Ezeoha-San Rafael, CA
Sonoma City Colored Pencil Artists
Southern Exposure Kids Art Project Benefit
-San Francisco, CA
Stephan Stubbins
Suzy Locke & Associates-Oakland, CA
Symbolic Dance & Fitness-San Francisco, CA
Kaylan Thornhill-San Diego, CA
Virginia Tominia
Samuel Tubiolo-Napa, CA
Richard Valones-Reston, VA
Nancy Wakeman-San Francisco, CA
Jake Ward
Wildflowers Nature School
Helene S. York

*Donor locations outside Sonoma County are listed.
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