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EMBARGOED

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Cultural Trust awards record \$4.15 million to Oregon cultural organizations statewide

Salem, Ore. – An increase in fiscal year 2025 donations, as well as investment earnings, has resulted in an all-time high of \$4.15 million awarded to cultural nonprofits and organizations statewide by the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The \$4.15 million includes awards to 91 individual arts, heritage and humanities nonprofits, organizations and state cultural agencies. Among them is a total of \$1,038,285 for the Cultural Trust's five statewide partners (Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Heritage Commission, Oregon Humanities, Oregon Historical Society and the State Historic Preservation Office), and \$1,038,285 for 45 County and Tribal Cultural Coalitions – who annually award an average of 450 local grants within their communities.

In addition, \$2,076,570 in competitive Cultural Development Program grants were awarded to 91 cultural nonprofits serving most geographic regions of the state.

“Art and culture thrive in every corner of Oregon, and the Oregon Cultural Trust is proud to support this essential work in communities large and small. In the face of national funding disruptions, we invite all Oregonians to take advantage of our unique cultural tax credit right here at home and help ensure a steady, reliable endowment for culture both now and for generations to come,” said Sean Andries, Cultural Trust Board Chair.

The 91 **Cultural Development grant awards** range from \$5,000 to \$40,000 with an average grant award of \$22,810. Funding was highly competitive, with 44 percent of eligible applicants receiving an award. The majority of these grants were funded at 85 to 100 percent of the amount requested.

Cultural Development Program awards fund nonprofit projects or programs that increase access to culture, invest in organizational capacity, support community creativity and/or provide cultural heritage and historic preservation. Applications were reviewed and scored by peer review panels; final award amounts were determined and approved by the Cultural Trust Board of Directors at its Aug. 21 meeting.

Award recipients are recognized for their excellence, many of whom are receiving their first-ever Cultural Trust award. Organizations receiving full funding include:

The High Desert Museum, Bend: \$20,000

To support the development of the Volcanoes exhibition and associated programming, which will explore the cultural connections between humans and the volcanic landscapes that define Central Oregon and preserve the lesser-known stories rooted in this dynamic terrain. Multidisciplinary experiences will blend culture, art and science to illuminate the interplay between people and this evolving volcanic environment with a focus on the stories and knowledge of Indigenous communities.

Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts, Pendleton: \$40,000

To support the artist-in-residence printmaking program and the traditional arts program helping to expand arts programming, increase educational opportunities and foster economic empowerment for Native artists. As well as for all Oregonians seeking to appreciate, learn and support both contemporary and traditional Native artists and art.

Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center, DBA Nez Perce Wallowa Homeland, Wallowa: \$28,000

To support the continued growth and sustainability of the Tamkaliks Celebration and Friendship Feast, a vital cultural homecoming that honors Nez Perce heritage in their ancestral homeland of Wallowa, Oregon. For over 30 years, Tamkaliks has been a volunteer-led, intertribal gathering that brings together Nez Perce families from the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. This investment will help sustain Indigenous cultural practices for future generations.

Josephy Center for Arts and Culture, Joseph: \$40,000

To support increased access to Nez Perce culture and history for both tribal members and rural Oregonians through a cultural engagement project led by the Josephy Center for Arts and Culture. Public exhibits, community programs and educational events rooted in Indigenous history and guided by tribal voices bring powerful, place-based cultural learning to local audiences. These initiatives aim to restore cultural access, support healing and strengthen connections to the land for all participants while promoting a more inclusive understanding of Indigenous history and culture.

Friends of Santiam Pass Ski Lodge, Beaverton: \$40,000

To support the restoration of the historic Santiam Pass Ski Lodge Community Center by funding the installation of an environmentally friendly and long-lasting septic system that will provide sanitary public lavatory and food services to visitors.

Medicine Bear Native American Spiritual Encampment, Portland: \$20,000

To support the expansion of Medicine Bear's Artist Apprenticeship Program and arts programming at the Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Center, empowering system-impacted and underserved youth through culturally grounded creative expression, mentorship and public engagement. This project will provide yearlong opportunities for youth to work alongside

professional Indigenous and BIPOC artists in studio sessions, workshops and community-based mural projects.

Northwest Alliance for Alternative Media and Education, Portland: \$40,000

To support the Northwest Alliance for Alternative Media and Education's (NAAME) arts programming that makes arts and culture accessible to 360+ justice-involved youth ages 14-25 living in youth correctional facilities (YCFs) throughout Oregon. Their programming offers culturally responsive, arts-integrated and trauma-informed arts workshops and mentorship for youth to explore creative outlets for self-expression and amplify their voices in a supportive community to foster community and cultural healing and disrupt cycles of recidivism, poverty and intergenerational trauma.

Old Church Society Inc., Portland: \$20,000

To support roof repairs for this historic building. The Old Church's roof is 31 years into its 50-year lifespan, with documented cracked slate tiles, moss-lifting shingles, leaks under decorative iron bolts and wood rot on pinnacles. This work is part of TOC's broader strategy to resist disruption by preserving a historic venue and using it to uplift others.

Portland Street Art Alliance, Portland: \$40,000

To support the launch the Clatskanie Mural Festival, a new regional initiative led by Portland Street Art Alliance (PSAA) in partnership with the Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce. This project will result in the creation of several vibrant public exhibits (murals) that celebrate and reflect the identity of the rural town of Clatskanie, Oregon. PSAA will engage regional artists to design and create murals that are stylistically and thematically aligned with the values and aesthetics of the local community. Educational opportunities in mural-making, along with artist residencies and public programming, will foster local engagement and support emerging creative leaders in rural Oregon.

Portland SummerFest (Opera in the Park), Portland: \$30,000

To support the first-ever free public performance of a mariachi opera by presenting José "Pepé" Martínez and Leonard Foglia's "Cruzar la Cara de la Luna" (2011), the world's first mariachi opera at Peninsula Park (Portland) and Shute Park (Hillsboro) over one weekend in August 2026. This will mark the work's Oregon premier and the first time it is offered free and open-to-the-public anywhere in the world. A bilingual concert opera blending mariachi and classical traditions, "Cruzar" tells a deeply moving story of migration, identity and family, resonating powerfully with Oregon's Latin American, immigrant and bilingual communities. Portland SummerFest (AKA OPERA IN THE PARK Portland) has secured the performance rights at a significantly reduced cost available only because of its long-standing, non-ticketed model of presenting high-caliber opera to the public.

Restore Oregon, Portland: \$27,200

To support Restore Oregon's capacity to expand and redefine the Preservation Together Program to reach communities statewide, and provide technical and advocacy support to historic resources while also becoming a more effective service provider to the field of historic preservation.

SMART Reading, Portland: \$10,000

To support access to culturally inclusive children's literature and reading experiences for underserved Oregon communities by funding the purchase and distribution of new, culturally diverse books in rural parts of Oregon. SMART Reading is a children's literacy nonprofit that provides free, one-on-one reading sessions and books to over 20,000 children annually in Oregon. This project will increase public access to culture by removing financial, geographic and systemic barriers that limit exposure to literature representing diverse cultures, identities and experiences.

Oregon Repertory Singers, Gladstone: \$5,000

To support the upgrade of Oregon Repertory Singers' outdated Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system. A more modernized and updated CRM will enhance ORS' organizational capacity, sustainability and community impact. Their current donor and program tracking systems are fragmented, limiting their ability to effectively steward donors, communicate with their audience and manage youth choir participation. ORS will build stronger, more connected relationships with the diverse communities they serve, ensuring that the choral arts remain accessible, inclusive and sustainable for years to come.

Fool House Art Collective, Lake Oswego: \$8,000

To support the final phase of transforming "The House," Fool House's ADA-accessible rehearsal and performance studio, into an affordable, fully equipped black box venue for up to 40 guests in Southwest Portland. This project will fund the installation of professional lighting, sound and projection systems, blackout curtains and modular stage risers, eliminating their reliance on costly equipment rentals and enabling high-quality productions for local artists. By investing in the technical core of this space, Fool House Art Collective is creating a space where diverse stories, cultures and artistic visions can take center stage.

Astoria Arts and Movement Center, Astoria: \$40,000

This project seeks to historically restore the Odd Fellows ballroom, home to the nonprofit Astoria Arts and Movement Center (AAMC) studio since 2011. Support will go directly to essential repairs and paint. This project will preserve the 1923 ballroom and allow the AAMC to continue its mission to provide dance, performing arts, cultural and movement classes that enhance and inspire the community.

Neskowin Coast Foundation aka Sitka Center for Art and Ecology, Pacific City: \$40,000

To support access to high-quality arts education for over 5,000 low-income children and youth by partnering with Title 1 schools in rural areas of Oregon's north coastal region.

Oregon Coast Youth Symphony Festival Association, Newport: \$24,000

To support the expansion of activities and events, the number of high school orchestra students participating, and the number of professional conductors and composers participating in the 10-year anniversary of the Oregon Coast Youth Symphony Festival in Newport.

Ballet Fantastique, Eugene: \$7,500

To support Ballet Fantastique (BFan) with a one-time purchase of a high-resolution laser projector for in-house theatrical use, increasing production quality, reducing recurring costs and streamlining workflow. Savings will be re-invested to protect affordable ticket options for BFan's mainstage and outreach performances, ensuring access for underserved audiences at a critical

time in the arts landscape. This strategic infrastructure purchase increases BFan's sustainability and capacity.

Lane Arts Council, Eugene: \$27,000

To support Lane Arts Council in a process of embedding belonging, inclusion and accessibility into all aspects of its work. LAC will partner with The Avarna Group, who will conduct an audit, provide actionable recommendations and assist in implementing strategies for LAC to: identify and address barriers to participation for marginalized communities; strengthen representation and inclusion across staff, board and programming; build trust and foster meaningful relationships with community members and partners; and increase accountability and alignment between LAC's accessibility values and organizational practices.

Oregon Shakespeare Festival Association, Ashland: \$40,000

To support the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's FAIR Program, a transformative career development initiative that bridges equity gaps in the theatre industry by providing hands-on training, stipends and mentorship to emerging artists and administrators. FAIR cultivates the next generation of diverse theatre leaders through immersive fellowships and assistantships within OSF's renowned repertory model, while infusing the organization with fresh perspectives. In 2026, FAIR will empower up to 20 participants (60% from underrepresented backgrounds) with skills, networks and public engagement opportunities, ensuring a vibrant future for both Oregon's arts ecosystem and the national theatre field.

First time recipients include 19 organizations, the majority serving communities outside the Portland/Metro area:

1. India Cultural Association (Portland)
2. Columbia Gorge Discovery Center (The Dalles)
3. Wild Rivers Coast Foundation for Dance (Brookings)
4. Casa de la Cultura Tlanese (Salem)
5. Mt. Hood Unida (Rhododendron)
6. Siletz Regalia Sharing Closet (Portland)
7. Fool House Collective (Lake Oswego)
8. Dry Canyon Arts Association (Redmond)
9. Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association (Portland)
10. Flip Museum Incorporated (Beaverton)
11. Dorymen's Heritage Center (Pacific City)
12. Medicine Bear Native American Spiritual Encampment (Portland)
13. BASE (Medford)
14. Bedrock Theatre (Gresham)
15. Astoria Arts and Movement Center (Astoria)
16. Oaks Park Association (Portland)
17. Columbia Basin Basketry Guild (Portland)
18. Albina Music Trust (Portland)
19. Historic Jacksonville Inc. (Jacksonville)

See a full list of [County and Tribal Cultural Coalition award allocations](#).

See a list of the 91 [Cultural Development awards](#), alphabetical by region.

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Created in 2001 by the Oregon Legislature, the Oregon Cultural Trust was established as an ongoing funding engine for arts, heritage and humanities across the state. Funding comes through the Cultural Tax Credit, which empowers Oregonians to direct more of the taxes they pay to supporting cultural opportunities for all. Oregon is the only state in the country that gives its citizens this choice. Fifty eight percent of the money goes directly to cultural organizations and agencies in the form of grants. The remaining 42 percent helps grow a permanent fund for culture. It's described by the Oregonian as "A way to make paying state taxes satisfying." The Trust's three grant programs fund five Statewide Partners, 45 County and Tribal Coalitions and qualified cultural nonprofits through competitive Cultural Development grants. Learn more at CulturalTrust.org.