

BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION
Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Committee

Recommendation Number: (20240423-005)

**Resolution of the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission Budget
for Increase Funding for Community Navigators in the Economic Development
Department's Arts Funding Programs.**

Background:

Every year The Economic Development Department (EDD) creates grant opportunities for local artists. Those opportunities are: Nexus, Live Music Fund, Elevate, Thrive and Creative Spaces Assistance Program.

The current grant that's open is Nexus which provides up to \$5,000 to new and emerging local small organizations, individual artists, and small arts businesses to produce creative public projects.

EDD has eleven navigators that assist with translation, support and anything that's needed for communities interested in applying to successfully submit their grant applications.

Timeline:

- NEXUS applications opened on **Tuesday, April 16th, 2024**
- Applications close on **May 14th, 2024 (3 weeks from now)**
- **28-day application window**

2024 Community Navigators / Community Amplifiers

1. Austin Revitalization Authority (ARA)
2. Art Spark Texas
3. Business & Community Lenders (BCL) of Texas
4. Almost Real Things (ART)
5. Economic Growth Business Incubator (EGBI)
6. Health Alliance For Austin Musicians (HAAM)
7. Mission Capital
8. On The Money Finance LLC
9. Greater Austin Performing Arts Center, Inc. dba The Long Center for Performing Arts
10. Visual Matters Consulting
11. The Volt Studios

Feedback from the community provided to the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission Arts and Culture Workgroup:

1. There are Spanish speaking groups that have been looking forward to applying and to date, **only one out of the eleven** Community Navigators (Almost Real Things) in the list above has publicly marketed any assistance or resources in Spanish relating to NEXUS or any other cultural arts funding program from the city.
2. **None of the eleven** community navigators have a documented history of working with Spanish-language / immigrant artists or cultural organizations.
3. **There are only two upcoming info sessions that are in Spanish:**
 - a. **ART General Info Session in Spanish** **May 4th, 2024 @ 2:30-4PM**
 - b. A general info session for anyone interested in the NEXUS program hosted by community navigator Almost Real Things.
 - c. **NOTE:** This workshop is being offered so late in the process, that Spanish-language artists interested in applying only have 10 days to complete their applications.
 - d. **City of Austin Application Assistance** **April 29th & May 6th @ 5-8PM**
 - e. City of Austin will make Spanish-language interpreters available on site.
 - f. **NOTE:** Assistance is on a first come, first serve basis. Last year, the one Spanish-language interpreter did not show up.
4. ED newsletter mailed out on APR 16th informing of NEXUS was only sent out in English.
5. All City links to Spanish-assistance event registrations are still in English.
6. There is minimal, if any, public marketing and promotion of this funding opportunity to Spanish-language artists or Latino/Latinx communities.
7. Why weren't any workshops or info sessions offered in Spanish **BEFORE** the launch of the program? In order to give new applying artists ample time to prepare, gather materials and documents?

Recommendation:

Due to the upcoming deadline, the Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission recommends extending the application deadline to allow ample opportunity for applicants to complete.

Additionally, we recommend reevaluating contracts with community navigators in that they meet the criteria and capacity below.

The City should immediately onboard / contract a BIPOC community organization (or a team of orgs) to offer more promotion of the city's cultural funding programs in Spanish, offer substantial in-person resources that are language-accessible and culturally relevant for Austin's Latino/Latinx & Spanish-speaking arts community. Contract should match the amount of other community navigator contracts. Organization / team should, in comparison the current list of community navigators:

1. Have a mission **directly serving Latino / Latinx / Spanish-speaking artists.**

2. Have a **documented history of deep engagement with the following communities in Austin:**
 - Spanish-language artists
 - Immigrant collectives
 - Latino-Latinx cultural workers
 - Chicano activists
 - Latin-American folkloristas
3. Have the capacity to outreach and market the City's cultural funding opportunities **IN-SPANISH** to a vast network of Latino/Latinx artists & spanish-language cultural workers.
4. **Have a culturally sensitive team** that can provide adequate in-person program and application assistance.
5. **Have native spanish-speaking personnel** that can guide and assist Latino/Latinx artists & spanish-language cultural workers throughout the entire application process, not just stand-alone general info sessions.
6. Have the capacity to develop **pro-active and robust outreach campaigns** that connect city funding opportunities to Latino / Latinx artists. Beyond one social media post like what is currently being done by the **one** community navigator.

Date of Approval: April 23, 2024

Record of the vote: 6-0

For: Commissioners Lyssette Galvan, Daniela Silva, Amanda Afifi (Chair), Ivanna Neri (Co-Chair), Leonor Vargas, Commissioner Dulce Castaneda, Kevin Jackson, Jr.,

Against: None

Absent: Commissioners Vanessa Maldonado and Jesus Perales

Attest:



Ivanna Neri, Co-Chair