



ARTS COUNCIL for Monterey County

• *Enriching the lives of our community through the arts* •

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tri-County Arts Councils Partner to Address Arts Education Teacher Shortage, Seek Consultant for “Visual and Performing Arts Pathways Project”

[MONTEREY, CA - July 10, 2025] The San Benito County Arts Council, in collaboration with lead partners the Arts Council for Monterey County and Arts Council Santa Cruz County, today announced they are seeking qualified consultants to support the upcoming Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Pathways Project. This critical initiative, launching in August 2025 and concluding in September 2026, aims to develop workforce pathways for VAPA teachers across San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz counties. The project is funded through Governor Newsom’s California Jobs First Initiative and administered by Uplift Central Coast.

The Visual and Performing Arts Pathways Project was created in response to the urgent need for credentialed arts educators in the region, which was exacerbated by the historic passage of Proposition 28, the Art and Music in the Schools Act, in November 2022. While Prop 28 allocates approximately \$1 billion annually for arts education in California public schools, a recent SRI Education policy brief estimates a statewide need for an additional 5,457 VAPA teachers. Locally, the tri-county region faces a shortage of 285 credentialed art teachers.

“Bringing together diverse stakeholders and keeping this ambitious project on track will be key,” added Jacquie Atchison, Executive Director of Arts Council for Monterey County. “We’re looking for a consultant who can help us stay aligned, keep our timelines on track, and ensure our deliverables are met.”

The project will engage local school districts, county offices of education, community colleges, higher education institutions, and artists to identify ways to train and upskill local artists and teachers, preparing them for “good jobs” - local positions that offer full-time salaries, health benefits, and retirement benefits.

“We recognize the immense talent within our communities, especially among uncredentialed teaching artists who bring rich cultural traditions to their work,” stated Sarah Brothers, Arts Education Director of Arts Council Santa Cruz County. “This initiative will center their voices and experiences, creating an equity-centered credentialing pathway that is reflective of our region’s unique artistic and cultural heritage.”

The selected consultant will play a pivotal role in the project’s success, providing critical structure and support to the planning process. Their responsibilities will include planning, facilitation, coordination, and reporting to ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of the plan through effective project management practices. While subject-matter expertise is preferred, it is not required; the councils are primarily seeking a consultant with a proven track record in project planning, stakeholder coordination, facilitation, and reporting.



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“This project is a game-changer for arts education in our region,” says Jennifer Laine, Executive Director of the San Benito County Arts Council. “With the support of Uplift Central Coast and our partners, we’re building a sustainable pathway for local artists and educators to become credentialed teachers, ensuring our students have access to the high-quality arts education they deserve under Prop 28.”

The project’s goals include:

- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment of the current VAPA teaching workforce gap in the tri-county region.
- Engaging a broad base of community stakeholders and culture bearers through workshops and planning events.
- Creating a credentialing pathway that is locally rooted, equity-centered, and reflective of the region’s artistic and cultural heritage.

[DOWNLOAD THE RFQ HERE](#)

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About the Arts Council for Monterey County

The Arts Council for Monterey County enriches the quality of life for all residents by providing arts leadership, advocacy, education, and services.

About Arts Council Santa Cruz County

Arts Council Santa Cruz County champions the arts by funding, advocating, and providing programs that inspire creativity and connect the community.

About the San Benito County Arts Council

The San Benito County Arts Council is dedicated to fostering arts and culture in San Benito County through education, advocacy, and community engagement.

About Uplift Central Coast

Uplift Central Coast is dedicated to fostering economic development and creating good-paying jobs within the Central Coast region, administering initiatives funded through Governor Newsom’s California Jobs First Initiative.