

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Funding for Central Coast Artists Across Disciplines: Individual Artists Fellowship Application Opens April 15th

SANTA CRUZ, CA — Artists across the Central Coast are invited to apply for a transformative funding opportunity celebrating artistic excellence and community impact. The California Arts Council's Individual Artists Fellowship program, which launches on the Central Coast, will accept applications from creators across the six-county region, including Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Ventura counties, beginning April 15th.

The California Arts Council has selected Arts Council Santa Cruz County as one of only eight organizations statewide to lead the [Individual Artists Fellowship](#). While other partners oversee different regions, Arts Council Santa Cruz County focuses exclusively on the Central Coast. By collaborating with local arts agencies across neighboring counties, the program ensures that artists throughout our region receive the application support needed to access these state-funded fellowships.

The fellowships provide unrestricted funding, allowing artists to use the awards for any purpose that supports their creative practice. The program is structured to support artists at every stage of their career:

- **Emerging Artist Fellows (\$5,000):** For those at the beginning of their public career who are starting to engage the larger community.
- **Established Artist Fellows (\$10,000):** For mid-career artists with a consistent body of work, they regularly make their work public and engage the community in their practice.
- **Legacy Artist Fellows (\$50,000):** For artists with a significant body of work produced over a substantial period of time that has engaged their communities and made a significant social impact.

"It is a rare opportunity for local creators to receive the acknowledgment and investment they deserve," says Sally Green, Deputy Director of Arts Council Santa Cruz County. "By partnering with arts agencies across the Central Coast, we're ensuring support reaches every corner of our creative landscape. This fellowship offers more than money—it offers a bit of space for creators to breathe, allowing them to continue the essential work of shaping our region's cultural legacy."

Through this regional collaboration, Arts Council Santa Cruz County is joined by the Arts Council for Monterey County, San Benito County Arts Council, San Luis Obispo County Arts Council, Santa Barbara County Office of Arts and Culture, and Ventura County Arts Council to provide outreach and

support to artists throughout the application process and uplift the next group of Individual Artists Fellowship awardees.

"We know application processes can often feel like a barrier. We kept the application as simple as possible, and we want to be a partner to every artist who applies across the Central Coast," says Tamara Liu, Grants Manager, Arts Council Santa Cruz County. "Unrestricted funding is an incredible opportunity that is rarely available for artists, and we're committed to providing the guidance and one-on-one support needed for every artist and culture bearer to apply."

For marketing materials and toolkits:[click here](#).

**How to Apply:** The application portal opens on April 15th. Applicant Orientations will be offered on April 15 from 1-2:30 pm and April 23rd from 6:30 to 8 pm on Zoom. Tamara will host Zoom Office hours for application support, including help with navigating the application portal, on Mondays from 4-5, starting April 20th. Each Central Coast county partner will host additional office hours for their communities. Artists are encouraged to review the eligibility requirements and register for an orientation now. For more information and links to register, [click here](#).

**About the California Arts Council:** The California Arts Council's mission is to strengthen arts, culture, and creative expression as tools to cultivate a better California for all. As a state agency, it supports local arts infrastructure, provides grants, and fosters accessible, equitable arts initiatives that reflect the state's diverse populations. <https://arts.ca.gov/>

**About Arts Council Santa Cruz County:** The Arts Council's mission is to nurture and invest in artists and the arts throughout Santa Cruz County. Together, we're building a stronger Santa Cruz County, where all artists have access to the resources they need to thrive; where a full range of creative expression is accessible to everyone; and the arts are recognized for their essential contributions to a healthy, vibrant, and representative community.

Through grants to artists and arts organizations, arts education programs that serve more than 11,000 youth across Santa Cruz County, and community initiatives such as Open Studios Art Tour, the Tannery Arts Center, and the Watsonville Center for the Arts, we help Santa Cruz County thrive. [www.artscouncilsc.org](http://www.artscouncilsc.org)

**About the Central Coast Regional Partnership:** The Individual Artist Fellowship program for the Central Coast is administered by [Arts Council Santa Cruz County](#) in collaboration with [Arts Council for Monterey County](#), [San Benito County Arts Council](#), [SLO County Arts](#), [Santa Barbara County Office of Arts & Culture](#), and [Ventura County Arts Council](#). Together, these organizations champion the arts and support the creative workforce across the region.