

Deschutes Cultural Coalition  
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Fiscally Sponsored by the Deschutes Public Library Foundation

Commissioner Patti Adair  
Commissioner Phil Chang  
Commissioner Tony DeBone  
Deschutes County  
1300 NW Wall Street  
Bend, OR 97701

November 8, 2021

Dear Deschutes County Commissioners:

The Deschutes Cultural Coalition, a local funding and cultural support program of the state's Oregon Cultural Trust, requests \$25,000 from Deschutes County to help restore and support county wide arts and culture organizations in their effort to rebuild their capacity to serve the citizens of this region. We thank the Deschutes County Commissioners for consideration of this proposal.

Since 2003 the Oregon Cultural Trust, created by the Oregon State Legislature in 2001, has been distributing funds throughout Oregon to support the arts, heritage and humanities. One of the channels of fund distribution is through tribal and county cultural coalitions. The 45 cultural coalitions, of which the Deschutes County Coalition (DCC) is one, are tasked annually with the job of distributing funds at a localized level, often to cultural groups that are not competitive in the state level grant process. In recent years, the Deschutes Cultural Coalition has been entrusted with approximately \$25,000 annually to grant to local arts and culture groups, from BEAT theatre for kids, LaPine Parks and Rec., to the Sisters Outdoor Quilt show as examples. While individual grants are relatively small, in the \$2,000 to \$3,000 range, the funds are vital to our smaller arts organizations. The DCC committee members are respected leaders in the arts, heritage and humanities fields.

In Q4 2020 the Oregon State Legislature voted to infuse funding into arts and culture organizations struggling for survival due to the pandemic. The State of Oregon allocated \$25,984,872 in CRF for Cultural Support (CRFCS) and tasked the Oregon Cultural Trust (OCT) with the job of distributing the funds. The OCT then turned to their on-the-ground partners, their cultural coalitions, to serve as local managers and distributors of these funds. The Deschutes County Coalition was entrusted with

\$1,018,567 to distribute equitably and in adherence with state guidelines. The DCC vetted applicants, wrote the checks, distributed the funds and reported back to the state. (The DCC is in the process of applying for its nonprofit 501(c)(3) status.)

The Deschutes Cultural Coalition knows how challenging it continues to be for our valuable arts and culture assets. We also know how to responsibly manage funds and have an excellent track record in leveraging support to maximize results. We are asking the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners to consider our request of \$25,000, which is matched dollar for dollar by an annual fund distribution by the Oregon Cultural Trust.

The collaboration with the county essentially doubles the county's support of the arts in this area at a time when arts organizations are struggling to stabilize and restore programming capacity. The DCC understands the magnitude of value the arts bring to this county through programs for children and families, vibrant entertainment venues and collaborations with the tourism industry. Our funding cycle can easily sync with the county's and we are more than happy to discuss strategies for leveraging the benefits our collaboration to support our creative community at a critical time.

We appreciate your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

*Cate O'Hagan*

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