

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Bijou McDaniel – Director of Communications, Youth Speaks,  
[bmcdaniel@youthspeaks.org](mailto:bmcdaniel@youthspeaks.org), (510) 684-4468

**Youth Speaks Named Awardee of California Arts Council  
Individual Artists Grant as State arts agency adds  
another \$2.8 million to its historic \$145 million  
investment**

*State funds support Youth Speak's capacity to invest in underserved communities, BIPOC, and artist-led teams, developing sustainable infrastructure, and strengthening artists' ability to ideate, test, and evaluate their narrative imagination*

**San Francisco, CA** [August 9, 2023] – The California Arts Council has announced a grant **award of \$925,000** to Youth Speaks as part of its *Individual Artist Fellowship* program in its final round of funding for 2022.

*"Youth Speaks is breaking new ground and forging a path ahead for the next generation of narrative leaders and artists who will carry the legacy of culture change work. We can't wait to see all the ways they'll inspire conversations, communities, and culture."* said **Mush Lee**, Executive Director at Youth Speaks.

The California Arts Council's IAF (Individual Artist Fellowship) Program grants support to individual artistic practices through **unrestricted funding** and state-wide recognition to artists at key moments in their careers, elevating their capacity for continued contribution to the field and our state.

This program is intended to support a broad spectrum of artists working in all disciplines, from diverse geographies and communities of all sizes across California.

Youth Speaks will **administer 34 Individual Artist Fellowship grants in 34 Northern California counties**, and as Lead Agency we will administer an

application, review process, and professional development program for this region.

Youth Speaks was featured as part of a [larger announcement](#) from the California Arts Council, with grant awards totaling **more than \$2.8 million across 48 grants** supporting artists, culture bearers, and cultural workers throughout the state of California.

*“Even as we spread the word for our 2023 program offerings, we are thrilled to shine a light and celebrate California’s arts workforce with one last funding announcement for 2022,”* said California Arts Council Director **Jonathan Moscone**. *“We are deeply grateful for Governor Newsom and the Legislature’s overwhelming investment in our agency’s work to ensure an equitably supported arts sector.”*

Altogether, the projected sum of grants awarded for 2022’s funding cycle is more than \$145 million—by far the biggest annual investment in California Arts Council history.

Applications for the Individual Artist Fellowship Program are currently **live on the Youth Speaks [website](#) until September 30, 2023, starting with more** announcements to come via [@youthspeaks](#) social media.

To view listings of all California Arts Council grantees for the final round of 2022, visit [this link](#).

## **Grant Guidelines**

**Deadline:** September 30, 2023, at 11:59pm Pacific Time

**Grant Awards:** \$5,000 – \$50,000

**Fellowship Period:** November 1, 2023 – October 31, 2024

**Application link:** [youthspeaks.org/individual-artist-fellowship/](https://youthspeaks.org/individual-artist-fellowship/)

**Who:** Artists who reside in Region IV of California

**Region IV includes the following 35 Counties:**

Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba counties.

### [Grant Promo Assets](#)

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*Youth Speaks creates spaces that challenge young people to develop and amplify their voices as creators of social change. By providing free arts education to youth with limited access, Youth Speaks programs empower young people with opportunities to discover and develop their own voices. As the leading literary arts and spoken word organization, Youth Speaks has served hundreds of thousands of youth in the Bay Area and across the nation over the last 26 years. Learn more at [youthspeaks.org](http://youthspeaks.org).*

*The California Arts Council is a state agency with a mission of strengthening arts, culture, and creative expression as the tools to cultivate a better California for all. It supports local arts infrastructure and programming statewide through grants, initiatives, and services. The California Arts Council envisions a California where all people flourish with universal access to and participation in the arts.*

*Members of the California Arts Council include: Consuelo Montoya, Chair; Vicki Estrada, Vice Chair; Gerald Clarke; Caleb Duarte; Ellen Gavin; Leah Goodwin; Alex Israel; Phil Mercado; Roxanne Messina Captor; Nicola Miner; and Olivia Raynor. Learn more at [www.arts.ca.gov](http://www.arts.ca.gov).*