

THE ARTS WILL



PLAY IN 2026!

Request for Proposals *THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026!* Cooperative Marketing Campaign Opportunity

APPLICATION DEADLINE: AUGUST 29, 2025

PRE-APPLICATION WORKSHOP: AUGUST 22, 2025; 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Click for workshop registration: [Link](#)

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CONTACT INFORMATION

City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs

arts.program@sanjoseca.gov

www.sanjoseculture.org

THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026! MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

1. Overview

The City of San José recognizes that arts and cultural programs and events contribute to the city's strong and healthy economy and are an essential aspect of a community's vitality.

THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026! is a cooperative marketing program created to enhance San José's branding and economy through the promotion of arts and cultural events and activities. From musical productions to art exhibits to film festivals and more, this opportunity supports the marketing and promotion of arts and culture programs and events that draw visitors to San José in 2026, the year that the region will attract major sports events including Super Bowl LX, NCAA Men's Basketball Regional Championships, the FIFA World Cup, and more.

THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026! marketing opportunity is intended to attract overnight visitors to San José to attend arts and culture programs, activities or events that have a measurable and positive economic and cultural impact on the City of San José. For applicants, this highlights the opportunity to amplify San José's unique identity, attract regional and destination overnight visitors, and support the city's economic growth by promoting its vibrant cultural experiences as a destination. In partnership with Visit San Jose, San Jose's destination marketing organization, the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) will support the participation of San Jose-based arts/cultural organizations or event producers in a cooperative marketing campaign led by Visit San Jose.

The program will create an individual and targeted marketing campaign for selected events and activities. Benefits will include Strategic Direction, Media Procurement, Digital Ad Creation and Campaign Reporting. This program will not fund the production or operations of new programs or projects, but the marketing of them.

2. Applicant Eligibility

- Applicant must be an arts/cultural organization or cultural event-producing entity based in San José.
- Proposed project or program must take place in San José between January 1, 2026 and December 31, 2026.
- Applicant must currently have capacity within their organization to facilitate the marketing program.
- Applicant must have a current San José Business Tax License.
- Compliance with prior grant agreement requirements with the OCA with no outstanding payments due to the City of San José.

3. Criteria

- Applicant's project, program, or event proposed for the marketing campaign and its reflection of San José's unique culture.
- Event or program will: be open to the public, be family-friendly, and have the potential to attract overnight visitors to San José.
- Applicant must possess capacity to actively participate in marketing campaign collaboration and implementation.

4. Range of Award Amounts

It is expected that the *ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026!* marketing opportunity will be highly competitive. It is anticipated that 10 to 15 applicants will receive a promotional campaign with an estimated worth in the range of \$10,000 to \$15,000.

5. Application Preparation and Submittal

- A required pre-application workshop will be held on August 22, 2025 from 1:00 – 2:30 PM via Zoom. At least one representative must attend. Workshop registration: [Link](#)
- Applications **shall not exceed 3 pages in a PDF or Word doc format**. Submit applications to the OCA Arts Program email: arts.program@sanjoseca.gov.
- Applications must be submitted by **5:00 PM on August 29, 2025**.

6. Application Review Process

- **Stage 1:** Applications will first be reviewed internally by OCA staff to ensure completeness and eligibility. Incomplete or ineligible applications will not move forward to Stage 2.
- **Stage 2:** Completed and eligible applications will be reviewed in accordance with the criteria by a committee of professionals with experience in marketing, digital promotion, and the arts. Representative(s) from Visit San José and the San José Arts Commission will also serve on the application review panel.

7. Timeline

- August 22, 2025: Application Workshop via Zoom
- August 29, 2025: Response to RFP due
- Mid-September 2025: Applications reviewed and applicants notified.
- Late September: Selected groups begin work with Visit San Jose on marketing campaign.

8. Participation Requirements

- After selected applicants receive an award notification letter from the OCA, they will work directly with Visit San José on the implementation of their marketing project or program.
- Ideally, the proposed event or program is limited in time and scope (over 2 or more days) to create demand for overnight visitors to come to San Jose.
- Selected organizations should be willing to partner with other local hospitality businesses (hotels and restaurants) to provide greater visitor experience.

9. Reporting Requirements

- All marketing campaign program recipients will submit a Final Report to the OCA on outcomes and goals achieved as a result of their marketing campaign.

10. Application Questions and Scoring

Applicant will respond to the following areas in a **PDF or Word doc format that does not exceed 3 pages**. Send submittals to the OCA Arts Program email: arts.program@sanjoseca.gov.

The following are the areas where the application will be scored and the points assigned for each following category (TOTAL = **100 points**):

A. Applicant name and contact information

Provide name of organization, address, specific contact person, email, phone number, website, and social media.

B. QUALITY OF PROPOSED PROGRAM AND ITS REFLECTION OF SAN JOSE'S UNIQUE CULTURE (35 POINTS)

Describe the project or program that you are seeking to involve in the *ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026!* cooperative marketing campaign. Please describe the content, the artists involved, the location, date(s) and time(s), and why this program reflects the best of San Jose's unique art and cultural scene.

C. POTENTIAL CAMPAIGN ATTRACTION OF AUDIENCE FOR MULTIPLE VISITS AND/OR OVERNIGHT VISITATION (30 POINTS)

Describe why and how this project or program will attract local, regional, and destination visitors for multiple visits and overnight stays. Please describe collaborations and partnerships that create resources, enhance audience reach, optimize the visitor experience, and convert into multi-day visits.

D. THOROUGHNESS AND IMPACT OF MARKETING PROGRAMMING (20 points)

Describe your organization's marketing assets and channels, reach and the size of your in-person audience. Using a recent example, describe a marketing effort that converted marketing reach into ticket purchases and/or event attendees. Please use quantitative and qualitative information in your descriptions. Please use marketing channels and/or platforms. *Please include a sample of marketing collateral.*

E. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (15 points)

Describe your organization's size including full time staff, current marketing capacity including contractors, partners, and volunteers.

THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026! MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Thank you for your interest in *THE ARTS WILL PLAY IN 2026!* marketing opportunity made possible through the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs and Visit San Jose. We hope that you will continue to engage and partner with us.



Please see www.sanjoseculture.org for more information about the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs programs like grants, special events, public art, and more. There are many ways to participate, create and connect in San Jose through the arts and culture in San Jose.



For more information about Visit San Jose and Team San Jose, and all of the free ways to engage and promote your programs, please see the industry partner webpage at <https://www.sanjose.org/industry>. If you have an upcoming event that you would like to promote on an online calendar and through other marketing channels, please submit event details here: <https://www.sanjose.org/submitevent>.