



NM Creative Industries Grant Report

City of Las Cruces, NM

June 30, 2024

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Narrative Summary of Project and Outcomes

Project Background

Name of Project: Cultivating Creativity in Las Cruces: Supporting arts businesses to grow our economy.

The Economic Development and the Quality of Life Departments of the City of Las Cruces, New Mexico, partnered to implement a Creative Industries grant during the period of October 2023 – June, 2024. Our grant proposal included a three-pronged approach to provide resources and education to the creative community and small artistic businesses: 1) providing workshops for creative industry business owners, 2) renovating the MakerSpace of the Las Cruces Public Libraries (LCPL) to support and inspire entrepreneurs, and 3) creating a Library of Things for artists and the community to check-out. In addition, our Departments hosted outreach events across the City to further engage with creative entrepreneurs through the Ask ALICE (Arts + Libraries Innovative Collaborative Entrepreneurship) program.

City of Las Cruces, Economic Development Department Participation

Deliverable: The Economic Development Department partnered with our local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to host a series of seminars targeting current business owners and those looking to start a business. These seminars were marketed to participants of the Ask ALICE programming.

The first seminar, titled "How to Start Your Business," focused on what is essential to start a business successfully, including resources, market analysis, and business plan basics. Training topics included business financing, business plans, business start-up/preplanning, managing a business, and marketing/sales.

The second seminar, "Leap Into Taxes for Business," discussed the different types of taxes, best practices to file and pay on time, helpful suggestions if you get behind, and resources available to learn more. The seminar was open to anyone interested in starting a business as well as business owners who were looking for a tax refresher. Attendance for both seminars was about 60 people, with approximately half indicating they were looking to start their own business.

City of Las Cruces, Quality of Life Department Participation Las Cruces Public Libraries

Deliverable: Renovating the Library Maker Space

LCPL used grant funding to renovate and expand its existing MakerSpace, creating two MakerSpaces for the community to use. The original MakerSpace was painted, and countertops were replaced. We purchased a specialty table for the second MakerSpace to provide a large, smooth work surface for multiple users; this space was also painted and features a custom mural by a local artist. As part of the renovation, we purchased a Glowforge Laser Cutter, a Maker Bot Sketch 3D printer and materials for patrons to use these machines.

Deliverable: The Library of Things

The Library's goal was to create a Library of Things where community members and aspiring artists could check out specialty tools that they may otherwise not be able to afford or find. When adding to the Library of Things collection, we focused on purchasing specialty items for the culinary, fiber and

visual arts. Our Library of Things, which is in two large cabinets, includes a sewing machine, knitting and crochet needles, a leatherworking kit, custom baking pans, paint brushes and more. To date, 7 items have been checked out – but we continue to market this amazing collection to our community.

Deliverable: Classes and Workshops

Las Cruces Public Libraries partnered with local business **Cruces Creatives** to provide classes for creative entrepreneurs. Beginning in late February 2024, Cruces Creatives offered 76 programs that had 342 attendees. Some of the classes included “Digital Paper Cutting Using the Cricut,” “Cardboard Sculpture,” “Painting Skin Tones: Color Mixing for Portraiture,” “Printing Making: Lino Carving,” and “Recycling Plastic into Jewelry.”

Las Cruces Public Art

Deliverable: Public Art sought to develop local artists’ skills with practical tools and resources to better participate in the creative economy. They provided public art-specific workshops, titled “Art Smarter, Not Harder.” Please see Appendix 1 for participant survey results.

Workshop 1: February 29, “What I Know Now”

- Number of Registrations: 39
- Panel Discussion with three local distinguished artists who offered insight into very different career paths.

Workshop 2: March 27 and March 28, “Financial Coaching for Artists”

- Number of Registrations: 18
- Presented by Tamara Bates, founder of “the dots between”, a financial planning program focused on artists needs. She also offered one-on-one consults with each attendee included with the workshop, which are valued at \$250 per hour per person. Ten attendees signed up for the consults after the workshop.

Workshop 3: April 18, “E-Commerce & Intellectual Property Rights”

- Number of Registrations: 20
- Guest artist offered tips for starting and sustaining an online business. His presentation was followed by an attorney who discussed intellectual property rights and Visual Artist Rights Act. The attorney provided attendees with a checklist that can be used for protecting original artwork.

Workshop 4: May 4 and May 5, “Making It Public”

- Number of Registrations: 34
- This two-day intensive workshop provided participants a better understanding of what is public art, how to apply effectively to call for artists, why and what insurance is required, and what happens after the commission is awarded among other topics. There were three guest artists who presented on funding a public art project, community engagement, and a project from start to finish – success, roadblocks, and navigating it all.

Conclusions and Next Steps

The City of Las Cruces is deeply appreciative of the New Mexico Creative Industries grant we received, in the amount of \$100,000. We will utilize the partnerships forged with the SBDC, Cruces Creatives, and other organizations to strengthen this program going forward, providing additional workshops and resources for creative entrepreneurs. Our creatives, arts businesses, and the general public will benefit from the improved MakerSpace facilities and Library of Things at the Las Cruces Public Libraries, allowing them to create new products and prototypes, and generally find inspiration in the process. Based on the results of the surveys conducted at the end of the “Art Smarter Not Harder” workshops, we know that participants found these workshops to be helpful and believe we have helped a number of creative entrepreneurs in the Las Cruces area to strengthen their arts businesses.

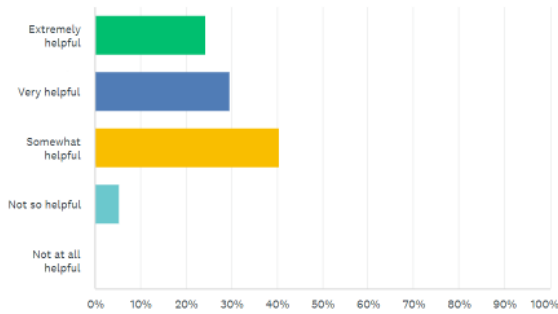
At this time, we do not have data to support new job creation or economic contributions from participants, but we will continue to track their progress toward new or expanded business ownership. We hope to see their efforts grow into new jobs for the community with measurable, far-reaching economic contributions.

Appendix 1: Art Smarter Not Harder Workshop Survey Results

Workshop 1: “What I Know Now”

How helpful was the content presented in the workshop?

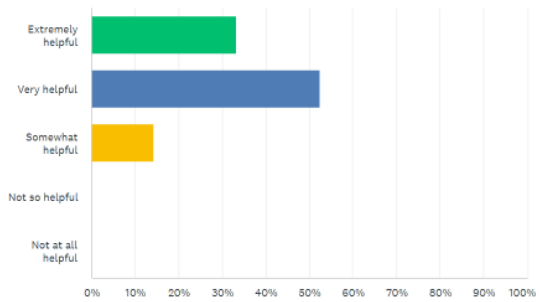
Answered: 37 Skipped: 1



Workshop 2: “Financial Coaching for Artists”

How helpful was the content presented in the workshop?

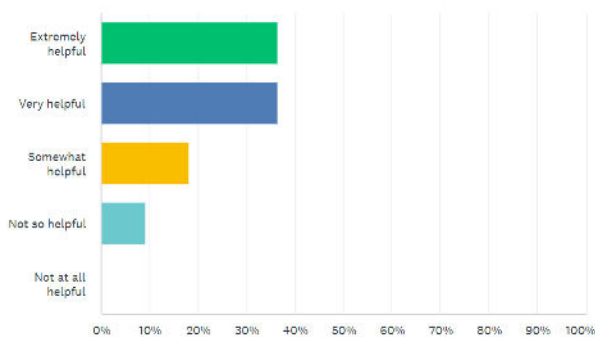
Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



Workshop 3: “E-Commerce & Intellectual Property Rights”

How helpful was the content presented in the workshop?

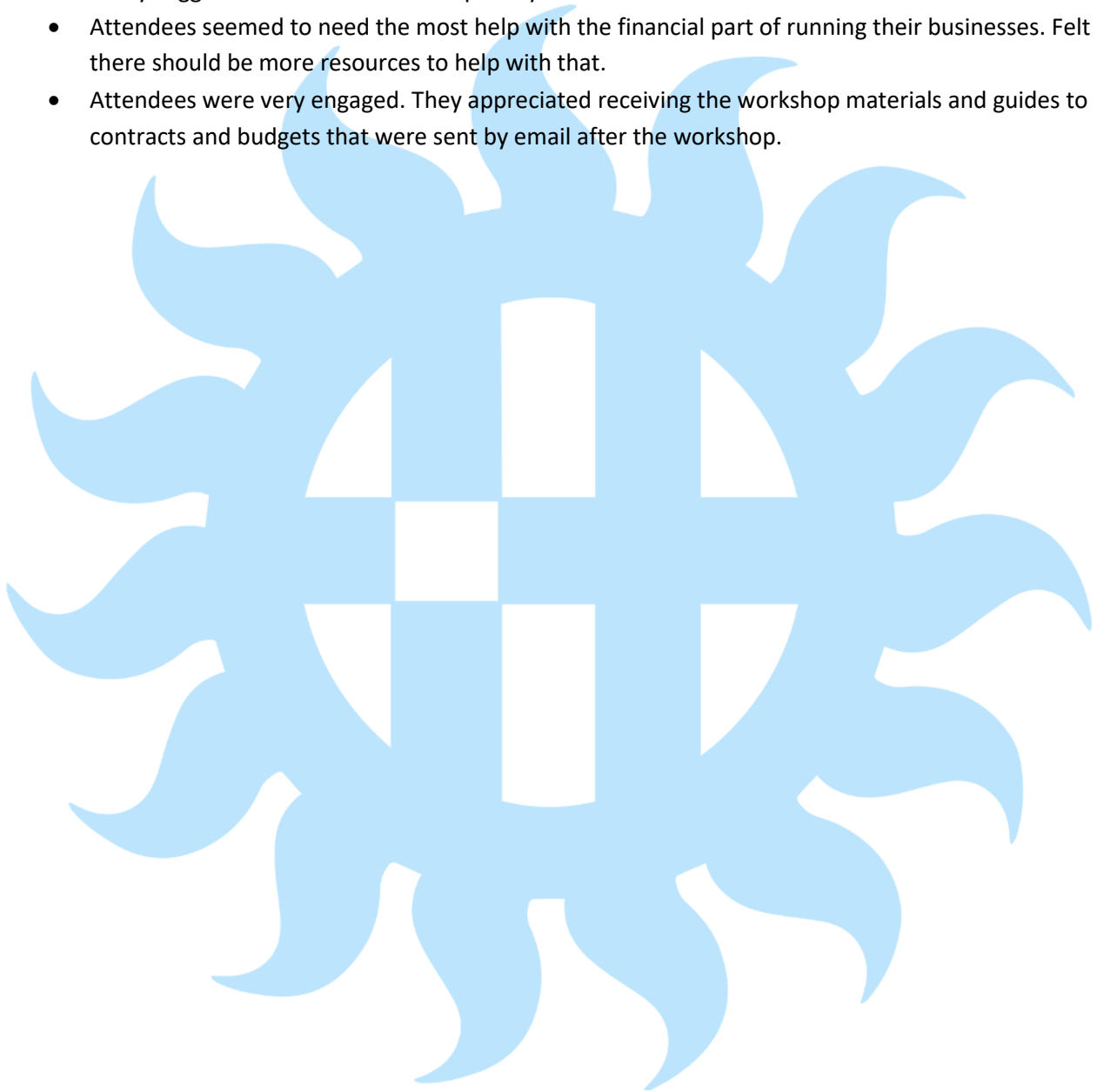
Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Appendix 1, Continued

Workshop 4, “Making It Public” Feedback from attendee surveys:

- Most attendees had positive takeaways from the workshops.
- Many suggested additional workshops they would like to see.
- Attendees seemed to need the most help with the financial part of running their businesses. Felt there should be more resources to help with that.
- Attendees were very engaged. They appreciated receiving the workshop materials and guides to contracts and budgets that were sent by email after the workshop.



Appendix 2, Comments from participants:

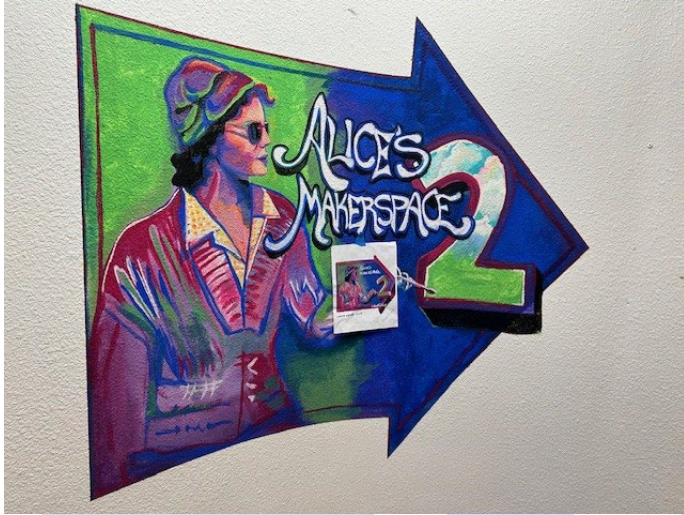
"I have been participating in as many ALICE programs as possible - free works great for someone on a limited income ..."

"Anyway, I would just like to give a HUGE KUDOS to Jesus, who has been the instructor for 2 of the classes I've been able to take. He does an excellent job of managing time, preparing, instructing, as well as, being very quick on his feet when "things" present that require some finesse. From personal experience, I can totally relate to being a guest instructor in another building - it can be challenging being a "new" instructor let alone not in your space."

"I also feel the other instructors whom I have taken classes with are doing a good job as well. They are very knowledgeable, respectful of the space they are using, and very available during class."

"Thank you for setting up this awesome opportunity for people to check out different art forms."

Appendix 3, Images and Links



New Mural at the Library



First check out of the Library of Things

[Cariño to our Las Cruces Public... - City of Las Cruces | Facebook](#)

[Have you gone to more than... - Las Cruces Public Libraries | Facebook](#)

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C3BkYenu1Z1/?igsh=MXBxa2g2eGd6dHhycQ==>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C20dAmMO7st/?igsh=MXNuZnFsdXAwdHVjNw==>

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C8P61cNxb5W/?igsh=ZHAxbzVrNHoyNTFk>



CALLING ALL CREATIVES!

ASK ALICE! ART SMARTER, NOT HARDER WORKSHOPS & CLASSES

Artists + Libraries Innovative Collaborative Entrepreneurship (ALICE) provides opportunities to explore new skills and meet other artists & creative entrepreneurs.

- Programming is offered at no charge!
- Workshops and Classes begin in February.*
- Explore the Library of Things

*Registration may be required and is highly encouraged.



Ask ALICE: Art Smarter, Not Harder is made possible with grant funding from NM Creative Industries Department.



Library patrons participating in a class in the newly renovated Maker Space area.

Art Smarter Not Harder Workshops

[Ask Alice Instagram Video Ad with Financial Planning Workshop](#)

[Ask Alice Mas! Las Cruces KTSM 9 News](#)

[All About Ask Alice Video Promo](#)



Las Cruces Public Art

Posted by Buffer

Apr 8 · 🌐

"Making It Public", a workshop for Las Cruces artists is coming May 4 and 5 to the Las Cruces Convention Center. This free 2-day workshop is for all creatives who are interested art as a profession. Guest artists/presenters include Margarita Paz-Pedro and Diana Molina. Deadline to register is April 19. Go to <https://buff.ly/4cMhRUJ> for more information and to register. Facilitated by Forecast Public Art in partnership with Las Cruces Public Art.



Making It Public Workshop Social Media Post



Making It Public Breakout Session



Financial Planning with Tamara Bates Workshop



What I Know Now Workshop



eCommerce & Intellectual Property Workshop



Ask ALICE promotional items

Appendix 4, Budget Report:

Project Budget	Projected	Actual
Speakers/ Instructors for Public Art and Library Workshops	\$40,000	\$38,406.91
Renovation/Upgrade of Las Cruces Public Libraries Maker Space	\$20,000	\$23,470.77
Marketing /Promotion	\$8,000	\$21,083.50
Supplies	\$5,000	\$7,454.62
Equipment for Las Cruces Public Libraries Makerspace	\$14,875	\$5,603.41
Food and Beverage for Workshops	\$5,000	\$3,980.79
Interpretation English/Spanish	\$7,125	\$0
TOTAL	\$100,000	\$100,000

The original project budget is included above, along with actual grant expenses. As we progressed with the grant implementation, we ran across some obstacles that required us to redirect funds to a greater need. Below are explanations for each line item and any deviations from the original budget.

Speakers/Instructors for Public Art and Library Workshops: We accurately predicted the amount for this expense, and all workshops were held as planned per the “Narrative Summary of Project and Outcomes” section on pp. 3-4. We reduced this line item by just \$1,593.09.

Renovations/Upgrades of Las Cruces Public Libraries MakerSpace: The MakerSpace renovation required slightly more funds in order to successfully complete the project. This line item also included “major equipment” purchases for the MakerSpace, such as the Glowforge, 3D printer, and the MakerSpace table. Although some donations were received for the Library of Things, other items were also purchased. These purchases were at a higher cost than projected, increasing this line item by \$3,470.77.

Marketing/Promotion: We recognized early on that marketing and promotion of this grant program and its deliverables was going to require significantly more funds than we had budgeted, because we had to first identify our key target audiences: arts businesses, creative entrepreneurs, and potential creative entrepreneurs of all ages. Then we created a marketing and promotion plan for the workshops and programs, Library of Things, MakerSpace activities, and outreach events. Marketing and promotion strategies were developed for social media as well as more traditional radio and print promotions. Customized swag was also purchased to give to

participants, creating a wonderful word-of-mouth network among our creative community. We increased this line item by \$13,083.50.

Supplies: We quickly discovered that we would need additional supplies for our workshops and our MakerSpaces, so this line item increased by \$2,454.62.

Equipment for Las Cruces Public Libraries MakerSpace: These funds were used for “minor equipment” purchases such as cabinets, a mobile packing table for the Glowforge, sewing machines, and podcasting equipment – which ended up costing less than projected. We spent \$9,271.21 less than projected on minor equipment.

Food and Beverage for Workshops: Food and beverages costs were less than originally planned; we spent \$1,019.21 less than projected.

Interpretation English/Spanish: Surprisingly, there were no requests for interpretation during any of the workshops, so we moved those funds to other line items.

