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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 1, 2025

State grants up to \$25,000 available for New Mexico creative businesses

SANTA FE — Established creative businesses in New Mexico can apply for state grants up to \$25,000, aimed at strengthening operations and supporting long-term growth.

The Business Development & Expansion Grant Program, administered by the New Mexico Economic Development Department's Creative Industries Division, is open to for-profit creative businesses with at least three years of operational history. Funding aims to strengthen business infrastructure and marketing and support long-term sustainability.

"New Mexico's creative businesses are key players in developing community culture and driving economic development," said **Shani Harvie**, director of the Creative Industries Division. "This grant helps smaller creative enterprises leverage state funding into tangible growth and helps position them competitively with other enterprises."

Applicants may apply for one cycle per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Cycle 1 runs Dec. 1-26 and closes at 6 pm MT. Cycle 2 runs Feb. 2-27, 2026, and closes at 6 pm MT. An informational webinar will be held on Dec. 5 at 10 am.

Previous award recipients demonstrate the diverse ways creative businesses are leveraging this support to expand their impact and deepen their roots in the community.

T.Skies Jewelry in Albuquerque established a national brand partnership with Polo Ralph Lauren featuring New Mexico-crafted leather belts. The company also expanded its KITA (Keeping Indigenous Traditions Alive) co-op program, helping students from underserved Native American communities pay for school.



Paseo Pottery in Santa Fe expanded group programming and launched a mobile pottery experience that blends cultural tourism with arts education, community giving, and opening partnership opportunities with Bishop's Lodge and the International Folk Art Market. The business hosts monthly Pottery Throw Downs, donating all proceeds to nonprofit partners. To date, they've contributed over \$118,000 to Santa Fe nonprofits.

"The \$10,000 award has already made a huge impact for Paseo Pottery and for our community," said **Angela Kirkman**, owner of Paseo Pottery. "We were able to purchase five new wheels and officially launch our new 'Paseo Pottery Pop-Up' program, where we bring pottery to you."

STEMarts Lab in El Prado partnered with the Taos Bureau of Land Management field office to create the Astro Trail project, which features augmented reality exhibits on public trails, integrating science and Indigenous cultural storytelling.



Funds have also supported the expansion of STEMarts train-the-trainer style programming, where students progress from apprentices to instructors, incorporating internship programs supported by the Department of Workforce Solutions. The company has expanded programming to 12 rural communities, including Taos Pueblo, Farmington, Vadito, Angel Fire, Santo Domingo Pueblo, and Heron Lake.

More information, application materials, and registration for the upcoming virtual info session are available at edd.newmexico.gov/creative-grants.

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EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by funding workforce training and infrastructure that supports business growth, helping every community create a thriving economy.

New Mexico Economic Development Department

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