NEW MEXICO
CREATIVE
INDUSTRIES
DIVISION

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$1 million in state grants to boost creative economies across New Mexico

SANTA FE — Artists, creative entrepreneurs and communities across New Mexico will benefit from $1 million in grants awarded by Economic Development New Mexico (EDNM) to eight projects that support creative businesses, expand career opportunities and strengthen local economies.

Initiatives range from public art and cultural preservation to business training, creative workspaces and programs connecting New Mexicans with careers in the creative industries. Each project will receive $125,000 to help local governments and state agencies launch programs that strengthen local creative economies. New Mexico's creative industries generate $6 billion in annual economic activity.

The 2026 recipients of the Creative Industries Public Development Projects Grant are:

1. **City of Albuquerque - Public Art Urban Enhancement Division-** will launch the SawMural! Mini-Mural Festival, a public art and creative workforce development initiative that will transform a section of the Albuquerque Rail Trail into an open-air gallery showcasing work by more than 40 artists from the greater Albuquerque region.

   Through two annual exhibitions, artists will receive paid commissions and hands-on experience creating public art, working with local government, and navigating a professional selection process. Partnerships with Warehouse 505, Explora, Friends of the Rail Trail, and DesignsW LLC will support artist outreach, project management, exhibition curation and community programming.

   The project will strengthen Albuquerque's creative workforce, expand access to arts and culture, increase youth participation in the creative economy and boost cultural tourism and economic activity along the Rail Trail.

2. **City of Gallup** - With creative direction from Akilah Martinez/Glittering World Girl and production support from Refract Studio, the City of Gallup will create Beyond the Bridge, a year-round, self-guided downtown walking tour combining augmented reality, local history, Indigenous futurism, artist profiles and connections to local businesses and cultural destinations.

   Launching during the 2027 Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial, the project will feature augmented reality installations, digital storytelling and a mobile-friendly platform accessible via QR codes, without requiring an app to download.

   The initiative will provide paid opportunities for Gallup-area artists, offer creative technology training for local and rural participants, and elevate Indigenous artists, creative businesses and cultural attractions.

3. **City of Las Cruces** - The City of Las Cruces Public Art Program will support workforce and business development for local artists, makers, performers, content creators and creative entrepreneurs through professional development workshops, public art programming and a new Immersive Art Experience Festival.

   Working with partners Cruces Creatives, Doña Ana Community College, New Mexico State University, Visit Las Cruces, local chambers of commerce and arts organizations, the project will provide training in creative skills, fabrication, technology, marketing and business development. Activities will be incorporated into Las Cruces Public Art Month and For the Love of Art Month.

   The initiative will culminate in a community-wide immersive arts festival showcasing local talent through interactive art experiences, performances, technology-driven installations and vendor opportunities.

4. **City of Santa Fe** – Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency- In partnership with the City of Santa Fe, the agency will rehabilitate more than 17,000 square feet of vacant public buildings at the Midtown Site to create affordable, long-term space for creative and community organizations.

   The first phase of the project will establish permanent facilities for six core partners, including the Santa Fe Indigenous Center, Model of Architecture Serving Society, Little Globe, Make Santa Fe, CENTER and YouthWorks, along with shared community gathering space.

   By providing below-market rent for workspace, workforce training and resources for artists, makers, designers and creative entrepreneurs, the project will support more than 10,000 community members annually.

5. **County of Santa Fe -** In partnership with the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy (ACCE) Council, Santa Fe County will launch a series of pilot initiatives to strengthen and connect its creative economy, focusing on rural and underserved communities.

   The project includes a countywide Creative Assets, Space, and Access Inventory and interactive online map, a virtual creative industries network, business development workshops for artists and creative entrepreneurs and rural pop-up marketplaces to expand market access for creative businesses.

   Supported by a Creative Economy Coordinator and community-driven planning process, the initiative will improve visibility, networking, business skills, and economic opportunities for artists, creative businesses, and cultural organizations throughout Santa Fe County.

6. **Incorporated County of Los Alamos -** In partnership with the Los Alamos Arts Council and Los Alamos MainStreet and Creative District, Los Alamos County will launch a Creative Industries Development Initiative to support artists, writers, makers, and creative entrepreneurs.

   The project includes creative business training and mentorship, expanded artist residency and literary festival programming, and an online Creative Industries Registry to connect creatives with resources and opportunities.

7. **New Mexico Arts -** Will expand workforce development opportunities for creatives across New Mexico through three statewide initiatives serving individual artists, traditional folk artists, and teaching artists.

   The project will deliver up to three Artist INC Express workshops focused on professional development and creative entrepreneurship, expand the Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program to support one-on-one training between master traditional artists and apprentices to preserve traditional art forms and sustain creative businesses, and offer up to five regional Teaching Artist Professional Development trainings to help artists build skills and work in schools, community organizations, and other professional settings.

8. **Taos County -** Will establish a countywide Creative Industries Navigator program to strengthen workforce development in the creative economy. The project will create an online career pathways portal, provide employer readiness education, and connect young people with paid internships and other work-based learning opportunities in creative industries.

   By aligning existing education, training, and workforce development resources, the initiative will help creative businesses attract and develop local talent, strengthen connections between education and employment, and increase participation in creative careers.

For more information or to access the application, visit edd.newmexico.gov/cid-grants**.**

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About the Creative Industries Division
The Creative Industries Division (CID) of Economic Development New Mexico (EDNM) supports the growth and sustainability of creative businesses, workers, and organizations across the state. Through strategic investments, partnerships and ecosystem development initiatives, CID works to strengthen New Mexico's creative economy and expand economic opportunity in communities statewide.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEW MEXICO

The mission of Economic Development New Mexico is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.



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