



101 PREFONTAINE PL S
SEATTLE, WA 98104
4CULTURE.ORG

Building for Equity: Project Development

Plain English Version of the 2026 grant guidelines

Grants Available!

Project Development grants are now available to help your organization or Tribe meet its cultural facilities goals. 4Culture has \$1.7 million in grants to back your efforts and make your cultural space dreams come true.

Overview of what 4Culture does and a description of our five program areas

4CULTURE provides funding and support for the cultural work that makes King County vibrant in various respects; we group this funding and support into five areas.

- The **Arts** department manages grants and programs that fund artist groups, arts organizations, and individual artists who provide access to art experiences for all King County residents and visitors.
- The **Heritage** department manages grants that help communities recognize, preserve, and explore a shared heritage in all the places where the past meets the present.
- In face of change, **Historic Preservation** grants support the preservation of the historic places that give King County its character.
- The **Public Art** department staff commissions and collects for the King County Public Art Collection, bringing artists' thinking to the spaces we share.
- The **Science and Technology** department manages grants for science-based organizations that foster curiosity about the processes that shape our world.

We offer grants for projects, equipment, day-to-day operating support, facilities and historic landmarks, and public art opportunities for artists.

The application process requires thought and care

If your organization or Tribe resides in King County, Washington, 4Culture invites you to apply for a grant to enhance and build your needed cultural space. To secure, acquire, or improve a cultural, scientific, or historic space or place, this funding supports the planning and development of your facilities project. This grant is funded by King County's [Lodging Tax and sales tax through Doors Open](#) legislation.

We aim to create pathways toward a racially equitable cultural landscape throughout all corners of King County and fund communities that historically faced barriers to purchasing and stewarding cultural space.

Eligibility, Pre-screening Dates, and Timeline

The address of your primary location (not a P.O. box) will, in part, determine eligibility. We must receive your pre-screening eligibility materials (explained below) by March 26, 2026, at 5:00 pm PST to allow 4Culture staff to pre-screen your application for eligibility. If you are determined eligible, you must submit your final application by Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 5:00 pm PST.

The application will not be available after March 26 if you missed the pre-screening deadline or are ineligible.

Entities eligible to apply for grants include federally recognized nonprofit arts, cultural, heritage, historic preservation, and science and technology organizations. Eligibility also includes Tribal governments, and public agencies; or fiscally sponsored (by a 501c3 partner) culture and science organizations that provide public benefit through their programs or activities.

You can find additional eligibility requirements below. After reading through the application materials, feel free to contact us about your organization, Tribe, and/or project eligibility status and how to access the grant application.

About Building for Equity: Project Development

The Building for Equity: Project Development grants invest in the planning and development phases of cultural facilities projects. 4Culture encourages grant applications from those who actively engage with organizational or Tribal readiness, project initiation and planning, fundraising, and early design of a facilities project. 4Culture has \$1.7 million available in the funding pool for this cycle.

These grants provide funding and technical support to help you develop your facilities. Awards of up to \$50,000 fund a wide range of activities related to planning and development. Free access of up to 10-hours of support from 4Culture's Network of Support consultants will be available to address specific challenges you might face with your facilities projects.

These grants come from King County's Building for Equity initiative to support cultural building projects. The grants aim to create pathways to racial equity and better access to cultural facilities. As a program, Building for Equity funds a unique combination of technical support, and strategic partnerships.

If you seek to fund the acquisition, construction, or renovation of a facilities project, we encourage you to check out our [Building for Equity: Facilities](#), [Building for Equity: Native Cultural Facilities](#), and [Building for Equity: Anchoring Community](#) grants. Projects that consist of general maintenance and repairs, the purchase of consumable items like light bulbs and tools, regular staff salaries, or program expenses are not eligible for these grants. For such projects, we encourage you to check out our [Sustained Support](#) grants.

Public Benefit: Why It Matters

As a public agency, 4Culture supports the cultural sector through revenue from such funding sources as [Lodging Tax, 1% for Art, and Doors Open](#). Core to our work, our Charter defines the requirement that everything we fund serves the public interest, enriching communities throughout King County.

The term “Providing Public Benefit” means using public funds to provide residents of and visitors to King County access and opportunities to experience cultural resources. “Public Benefit” means promoting positive impacts for King County residents and visitors engaging with various arts, culture, historic spaces, science and technology, and public art.

As you work through your application, tell us exactly how King County residents and visitors will be able to enjoy and learn from your work. Here are some ways you can provide public benefit:

- Provide the public with free or reduced rate access to your creative work, project, or program.
- Provide educational programs and experiences at publicly accessible venues of cultural or science organizations, Tribes, schools, or other such venues.
- Explore ways to expand and broaden your creative work and activities for the education and entertainment of the public.
- Participate in collaborative relationships with other cultural and science organizations, Tribes, individuals, and groups. Extend the reach and impact of a project or program for the benefit of the public.
- Share your venue at low or no cost to organizations, Tribes, or projects and activities that provide meaningful public benefits that are not achievable without access to a facility.
- Through technological or other means, provide services or programs in locations other than an organization or Tribe’s own facilities.

Our Approach to Racial Equity

With a focus on racial equity, 4Culture funds, supports, and advocates for culture to enhance the quality of life in King County. We acknowledge that systematic inequity takes many forms—racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, transphobia, heterosexism, and more. Our focus on human equity provides us with tools to dismantle cultural oppressions.

By focusing on communities that have historically faced barriers to purchasing and stewarding cultural space, Building for Equity is modeling a new facilities funding program. As a primary goal, this program means to create pathways toward a more equitable cultural landscape in King County.

To read more, visit:

[Racial Equity at 4Culture](#)

Mission, Vision, Values

Grant Criteria

We fund all our grants by carefully evaluating each application. For this particular grant, we'll look to see how well your project shows the following, for a total of 24 points:

Quality and Qualifications (5 points):

The reasoning behind your proposed planning and development activities. How your planning for development aligns with your organization or Tribe's ability to use your proposed enhanced facility. How central your facility's goals are to your mission. How well your cultural programs serve King County residents and visitors. Your reasoning for how your proposed facilities enhancements connects to serving King County residents and visitors.

Feasibility (5 points):

Your ability to complete the work described in your request with the resources and time available to your organization or Tribe.

Impact (5 points):

The impact that your proposed work will have on your organization or Tribe's future functioning and sustainability. How your community will benefit from these investments.

Advancing Equity and Inclusion (5 points):

Your organization or Tribe's focus on including historically marginalized communities, especially communities that have been and are disproportionately impacted by structural racism, in the planning and development of this facilities project. (Not a requirement for funding, but a consideration for the panel reviewing your application.)

Economic Impact (2 points):

How your project, organization, or Tribe enhances the local economy, through staff and contractors employed, volunteer hours and in-kind donations contributed, and indirect impacts like increasing commercial activity, activating physical spaces, and enhancing the vibrancy of communities.

Priorities (2 points):

How well organizations or Tribes located in a Community of Opportunity or are outside of Seattle, will prioritize serving historically marginalized communities or audiences. How well the proposed enhanced facility will accommodate and serve historically marginalized communities, audiences, and visitors.

Eligibility

Entities eligible to apply for grants include federally recognized nonprofit arts, cultural, heritage, historic preservation, science and technology organizations. Eligibility also includes Tribal governments, and public agencies; or culture or science organizations that are fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 partner and provide public benefit through their programs or activities.

To apply, your organization or Tribe must demonstrate it meets all these additional eligibility requirements:

Your Organization or Tribe

- Is not a K-12 school or school district.
- Has a board of directors and a proven two-year record of providing arts, cultural, and/or science experiences or services.
- Can provide a W-9 form with an address in King County, Washington.
- Has an annual operating budget of less than \$3,500,000.
- Is based in and conducts a majority (51% or more) of your mission-based, public-facing activities in King County.
- Is based outside of Seattle city limits, as determined by a mailing address that is not a P.O. Box.

OR

Is located in a **Community of Opportunity**. The Communities of Opportunity (COO) index includes a set of health and socioeconomic indicators to gauge community health and well-being. This Communities of Opportunity map can help you determine whether your organization or Tribe is located in a COO. [COO areas are outlined in purple in this map.](#)

Note:

If your organization or Tribe does not meet any of the criteria above, you must respond to the eligibility questions in the application draft by March 26, 2026 at 5pm PST. Responses to these questions will show how your organization or Tribe's primary mission and services support historically underserved communities over the last two years.

Science and Technology organizations must meet these additional eligibility requirements:

- Must be a federally recognized nonprofit organization (501c3) and incorporated in the state of Washington as a Nonprofit Corporation.
- OR must be fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 organization incorporated in the state of Washington and your fiscal sponsor also meets all of the Science and Technology-based organization eligibility criteria.
- Science and Technology-based organizations and their fiscal sponsors may not be:
 - A university, college, or institution of higher education.
 - An agency of the state or any of its political subdivisions.
 - A municipal corporation.
 - An organization that raises money for redistribution to multiple cultural organizations.
 - A radio or television broadcasting network or station, cable communications system, Internet-based communications venture or service, newspaper, or magazine.

Your Proposal

The facilities development work you propose must directly aid you in the planning and development stage of your facilities project and identify with one or more of the following four milestones:

Organizational or Tribal readiness

Anticipating the full impact of the project on your organization or Tribe's ability to function and serve its mission – both during and after the project. For more information visit: [Deciding on a Facility Project | Nonprofit Finance Fund](#)

Project initiation and planning

Describing the actual project, detailing spatial needs, locations, costs, phases, schedule, and feasibility. For more information visit: [Cultural Space Handbook | BASE Chapter 26](#)

Fundraising

Raising funds for the project or running a capital campaign which is a targeted fundraising effort that takes place over a defined period of time. For more information visit: [What Is a Capital Campaign? Ultimate Guide for Nonprofits | DonorSearch](#)

Design

Early designing work before construction documents. This includes pre-design/programmatic design, schematic/conceptual design, and/or design development. For more information visit: [Defining the architect's basic services | AIA](#)

Examples of fundable activities include:

- Consultant expenses for the creation of a strategic plan geared towards a capital campaign or a facilities plan. This excludes staff fees unless their work on the project is outside their regular job duties and payments are above and beyond their regular compensation structure.
- Hiring fundraising consultants or fundraising staff to expand fundraising capacity, develop a capital fundraising plan and/or conduct a feasibility study.
- Training for board, staff and volunteers in leadership development, fundraising, and/or institutional planning to prepare for a capital campaign or construction project.
- Architectural master planning, pre-design and concept design services.
- Building condition assessments, historic structure reports, and/or preservation plans.
- Consultant fees and other expenses for ADA-compliance facilities planning.
- Design and planning for facilities modifications in response to COVID-19.
- Expenses related to community charettes (intense periods of design or planning activities), including participant stipends.
- Real estate brokerage services to identify potential properties to lease or purchase.
- Financial planning to position an organization or Tribe to secure their facility's needs.
- Other facilities-related planning that increase an organization or Tribe's stability and resilience.

This program focusses on capacity building and **does not fund annual operating expenses**, full scope architectural services, rent, or construction projects. The program will reimburse staff expenses only if those expenses directly relate to the project development proposal described in your grant application. Please see our [Sustained Support](#) program for operating support. If you are looking to fund acquisition, construction or renovation of a facilities project, we encourage you to check out our [Building for Equity: Facilities](#), [Building for Equity: Native Cultural Facilities](#), and [Building for Equity: Anchoring Community](#) grants.

Discipline Definitions

4Culture funds organizations or Tribes and facilities projects that are focused on Arts, Historic Preservation, Heritage, and Science and Technology. Below are definitions of each discipline.

See [Discipline Eligibility](#) to learn more about our eligibility process.

- **Arts:** includes organizations and Tribes focused on creative place-making, cultural festivals, dance, design, film, folk and traditional arts, literary arts, multidisciplinary arts, music, theater, and visual arts.
- **Heritage:** includes organizations and Tribes focused on the preservation and transmission of local history; ethnic history; Native cultures; folklore and intangible cultural heritage; and historic and archaeological resources.
- **Historic Preservation:** includes organizations and Tribes focused on advocacy or assistance to preserve, promote, and sustain historic places. Includes organizational and Tribal education about historic built environments or stewarding historic properties that serve as venues for cultural activities.
- **Science and Technology:** includes organizations and Tribes focused on natural and social sciences, characterized by a formalized framework that entails the reproducible testing and revision of falsifiable ideas based on observable facts. This discipline also includes organizations and Tribes focused on formal and applied sciences, such as mathematics and engineering. Zoo or aquarium applicants must hold accreditation by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

If you're not sure if your organization, Tribe, or project fits the eligibility requirements or you have a question about these criteria, please contact Jayden Robles (Chumash/Cahuilla/Ohlone), Building for Equity Program Manager at jayden.robles@4culture.org.

Helping you Succeed

Workshops

Workshops provide an opportunity for you to meet staff, learn about the application process, ask questions, and meet other applicants. You will have to preregister for these workshops. The virtual, informal Zoom workshops can also help you feel more comfortable about the application process. Take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen your application!

Workshop Dates

- Feb 12: 12-1pm Zoom, [register](#)

- Feb 24: 12-1pm Zoom, [register](#)
- Mar 11: 6-7pm Zoom, with live Spanish translation, [register](#)
- Mar 26: 11am-1pm Zoom, [register](#)

You must have a zoom account to attend and please register ahead of time.

Note: March 26 will be an Office Hours session. There will be no formal presentation but grant managers will be on hand to answer any last-minute questions ahead of the April 9 application deadline. If you cannot attend a workshop, [this recording is available for you to watch](#).

You can watch the workshop video with [Spanish subtitles](#) or [Chinese subtitles](#)

Application Guide and Worksheet

- Watching this [step-by-step video](#) can assist you in creating your 4Culture account and accessing your application.
- Using this [Application Worksheet](#) will show you what questions will be asked in the application and gives tips from 4Culture staff on putting together a strong submission
- Here is a [sample application](#) that received funding in 2025
- See past [Project Development grant recipients](#) on our Awardees page.

Resources

Visit our [Building for Equity: Field Resources](#) page for resources on building an equitable development practice. This page explains what to consider before pursuing a facilities project, how to prepare for facilities projects, how to manage ongoing costs of facilities ownership, and much more.

We suggest digging into the [Technical Assistance](#) and [Cultural Space Handbook](#) from the [Cultural Space Agency's BASE program](#). This website includes lessons learned in the process of running a cultural space and a guide to navigating King County, City of Seattle, and other jurisdictions in Washington.

Contact Us: We're Here to Help!

4Culture can provide you with consultants who can help you present your project in the application. All consultants have extensive experience planning and developing cultural facilities projects. Feel free to contact 4Culture staff, Maya, at <mailto:jayden.robles@4culture.org> or Jay at <mailto:jayden.robles@4culture.org> to be connected to a consultant by March 26, 2026 at 5:00 pm PST. Technical support on your application will not be available after this date.

You can contact them for help about:

- Determining where you are and where you want to be with your facilities project.

- Approaching project brainstorming, planning, and timeline.
- Advice on scaling your project.
- Presenting your vision in the application.
- General information about best practices for project development.

This additional resource is intended to complement the information provided through 4Culture’s website, workshops, and staff. Consultants are not involved in funding decisions and will not share anything discussed in your consultation with the 4Culture team unless they need additional information to answer your questions.

Please contact the Building for Equity Team – Jayden, Maya, or Lauren (contact information below) – if you have any questions about this program. These advisors can provide guidance as you work through your application up until March 26, 2026, 5:00 pm PST. Feedback on your application will not be available after this date. We look forward to getting to know you and helping with your efforts toward your cultural facilities project! Try to contact us early to best prepare yourself.

You can contact us about:

- Your organization, Tribe, and/or project eligibility status.
- Accessing the grant application.
- Learning more about the panel review process, award notifications, eligible expenses, contracting, and reimbursement/payments.
- Reviewing grant application drafts.
- Scheduling a site visit or a meeting.

Jayden Robles (Chumash/Cahuilla/Ohlone), Building for Equity Program Manager
jayden.robles@4culture.org
206-263-2522

Maya Santos, Building for Equity Program Manager
maya.santos@4culture.org
206-263-0691

Lauren Miles, Building for Equity Support Specialist
lauren.miles@4culture.org
206-263-3210

What’s in the Application

The application requires **answering 14 questions** about your organization or Tribe, its activity, and the communities you serve and plan to engage. We need to understand your facilities’ needs with a focus on where you are and where you want to be.

Demographic Information (required)

When you create your grant application, you must provide demographic information in the profile section for the current year for your organization or Tribe. Please include current information about your board or governing body and staff. We use this information to help us understand how well we are doing in our efforts to reach all communities in King County.

Please read our [privacy policy](#) for information about how we protect your information.

Apply

You will apply through our online grant portal system at apply.4culture.org. **Make sure you have an active organization or Tribe 4Culture account and that your account profile is up to date by March 26, 2026 at 5:00 pm PST to allow 4Culture staff to complete eligibility pre-screening for this grant before the deadline.** You'll need to be able to log in to your account to access the Building for Equity: Project Development application. Individual 4Culture accounts may not apply for Building for Equity grants.

Once you've started your application, you can save after each step and sign out—your application will be saved as a draft that you can continue to work on up to the deadline. You must save a draft of your application with the eligibility section completed by March 26, 2026 at 5:00 pm PST to allow 4Culture staff to complete eligibility pre-screening for this grant before the deadline.

Once you click "Submit," your application is final. For support in creating your account and accessing your application, watch this step-by-step video. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions during the process.

Due Dates and Timeline

This grant is now open. [Apply here!](#)

Intent to Apply

Mar 26, 2026 5pm

Final Application

Apr 9, 2026 5pm

We must receive pre-screening eligibility materials by March 26, 2026, at 5:00 pm PST to allow 4Culture staff to pre-screen for eligibility. The application will not be available after that date. To be considered for a grant, you must submit your final application by Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 5:00 pm PST.

Please review the eligibility requirements and update your organization's account profile before starting your application. An account profile is a 4Culture online account that holds necessary information about your organization or Tribe, including contacts, financials, demographics, addresses, and mission statement.

Most 4Culture grants take approximately three months from the application deadline to when we announce funding decisions.

Contact

Jay Robles, (Chumash/Cahuilla/Ohlone)
<mailto:jayden.robles@4culture.org>
(206) 263-2522

Lauren Miles
<mailto:lauren.miles@4culture.org>
(206) 263-3210

After You Submit Your Application

Selection Process

A panel consisting of working professionals in the fields we fund, who represent all parts of King County, and who represent all sizes of organizations and Tribes, will review and score the grant proposals. Representing various points of view, this panel comes together to discuss proposals and scores based on the criteria. Then the panel provides guidance on which projects to award based on available funds.

During the panel review process, panelists may have questions about your project or application. Be prepared to schedule a 10-minute interview with the panel or provide a written or video response. You will have approximately one week from when you hear from 4Culture either to schedule an interview or to provide a reply. Being asked for additional details does not mean your application is more or less likely to receive funding.

If Awarded

You must begin your project development work within one year of being awarded and complete the scope within three years. During this three-year period, grantees are required to:

- Create a work plan and timeline for capital planning and development activities such as:
 - Organizational or Tribal Readiness
 - Project Initiation and Planning
 - Fundraising
 - Early Design
- Report on outreach and community involvement in project planning and development activities.
- Work with a consultant or other professionals to support project planning and development activities.

At the end of the contract, grantees are required to:

- Provide a summary of objectives achieved during the grant.
- Provide a current timeline of the facilities project.
- Respond to questions related to updates to the project.

Contracts expire three years after the award date (June 24, 2026). Proposed scopes of work should be completed by June 24, 2029.

Technical Support During Contract

If awarded, your organization or Tribe has free access of up to 10-hours of consultant support from 4Culture's Network of Support roster to help you address specific challenges you are facing in your project development work.

If awarded and you need space or specific technical support not available through our Network of Support consultants, you may request help working with a Cultural Space Partner from the Building for Equity: Anchoring Community program. A Cultural Space Partner provides free cultural space or technical support for a duration of 3-years. This partnership is arranged by 4Culture staff. If you have questions about Cultural Space Partnerships, please contact Maya Santos, Building for Equity Program Manager, at <mailto:maya.santos@4culture.org>.

Contracts and Payment

If we select your project for funding, after final approval for funding, we will notify you. Your program manager will contact you to review and finalize the scope of the service contract.

We distribute funds on a reimbursement basis, based on two submitted invoices. Partial upfront funds are available with invoice documentation. First payment requests are due by June 24, 2027, and final payment requests are due by June 24, 2029, when contracts expire.

Final Payment requests require reflecting on the original milestones identified in your application.

Requirements and Appeals

Learn about what will be required if you are awarded a grant, and about the process for [appeal of a 4Culture decision](#).

Translation and Assistance

The application guidelines, a detailed explanation of how to apply, and the application, itself, are in English. If you feel that English or a visual impairment hinders or stops you from fully understanding the grant or applying for it or if you would like to request assistance, please contact hello@4culture.org or call (206) 296-7580 or TTY 711, and we will make sure you get the support you need.

A brief explanation of the grant is linked below in these languages:

中文 ([Chinese](#))

Русский ([Russian](#))

Soomaali ([Somali](#))

Español ([Spanish](#))

Tiếng Việt ([Vietnamese](#))