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### Overview

Established in 2023 by Aspen City Council, the Cultural Vibrancy Fellowship enriches Aspen’s cultural environment by fostering community connections and artistic growth.

### Support for Artists

The fellowship provides direct funding to advance careers, sustain practices, and encourage innovation. The parallel youth program supports emerging artists with resources to develop skills and explore creative interests.

### Connection and Dialogue

Convenings bring artists together through shared experiences and guided discussions creating space for inspiration, reflection, and community building.

### Community Impact

This fellowship strengthens Aspen’s artistic network, fostering collaboration, and building a cultural foundation that benefits the entire community.



## Program Updates for 2026

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The program is introducing a new convening format.

**First Convening** (early January): Youth and adult artists will meet separately to orient within their own cohort.

- **Youth:** Evening 2-hr welcome session inclusive of dinner and an art-making activity at the Red Brick Center for the Arts.
- **Adults:** One-day welcome retreat at Toklat Center.

**Joint Convenings** (January through May): Convenings will no longer be limited to seated conversations; they will also include shared experiences. Fellows will attend performances as part of the program, adding opportunities for artistic exposure and shared inspiration.

- [Changemaker Series Bryan Smith: Capturing the Impossible](#), January 27, 5:30 PM–8:30 PM
- [Dance Aspen re:imagine](#), February 21, 6:30 PM–9:30 PM
- [BUGS Created by Kaki King and GLITCH](#), March 7, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
- [“Infinitely Yours” and other works by Miwa Matreyek](#), April 21, 5:30 PM–7:30 PM
- **Celebration Event at the Wheeler Opera House**, May 14, 5:30 PM–7:30 PM



## Program Guidelines

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### Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must demonstrate that funding is needed and will advance their career, creative practice, or innovative ideas.
- Funds must support artistic pursuits such as projects, procuring supplies, education, studio space, marketing, or business growth.
- Applicants must apply as individuals; organizations or groups are not eligible.

#### Youth Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be aspiring artists between 14 and 18 years of age.
- Applicants must live or attend school within the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary.
- Applicants must receive parental consent to apply.

#### Adult Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be artists living and/or working within the Aspen Urban Growth Boundary
- Applicants must be at least 18 years of age.

**Please Note:** Youth fellows may reapply if they received the fellowship in a prior year. Adult applicants are only eligible to receive the fellowship once.

### Available Funding

Funding is made possible through the Wheeler real estate transfer tax.

	Youth	Adult
<b>Number Available</b>	10	12
<b>Funding Amount</b>	\$750	\$5,000



## Required Work Samples

Submission requirements vary based on artistic discipline. Please read through the submission requirements for your discipline carefully to ensure you are submitting the appropriate content.

Discipline	What to Submit	Limits
Performing Arts	1 to 4 links of works	≤ 15 minutes total
Film	1 to 4 links of works	≤ 15 minutes total
New Media	1 to 4 links of works	≤ 15 minutes total
Visual Arts	6–10 images	Max 10 images
Literary Arts	1 to 4 samples of works	≤ 10,000 words total

## Fellowship Impact Statement

Within one month after the fellowship ends, recipients must submit a written narrative and images describing how grant funds were used and how they contributed to the cultural vibrancy in the community.

## Community Contribution

**Adult** fellows are expected to give back by fostering community connections and enriching Aspen’s cultural environment. Contributions may take many forms such as mentoring youth artists, teaching, volunteering at art events, performing or exhibiting work, or advocating new ways to engage with art and artists.

Youth fellows are not required to complete a community contribution.



## Review Criteria

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### **Criterion 1: Demonstrated Commitment to Artistic Pursuit**

Adult Weighting: **30%** | Youth Weighting: **40%**

- Does the applicant demonstrate through narrative and work samples a meaningful commitment to artistic development and pursuit?
- Does the applicant articulate how the grant award would allow them to develop their artistic skills and work?

### **Criterion 2: Impact of Funding**

Adult Weighting: **30%** | Youth Weighting: **20%**

- Does the applicant demonstrate that funding through and participation in the program will have a meaningful impact on their artistic work and development as an artist?
- Does the applicant articulate the impact of joining a cohort of artists?

### **Criterion 3: Artistic Merit**

Adult Weighting: **25%** | Youth Weighting: **40%**

- **Adults:** Do the work samples provided show artistic promise and/or demonstrate high artistic quality and fluency in the applicant's medium?
- **Youth:** Do the program samples provided demonstrate high artistic quality and promise of continued artistic development in the applicant's medium?

### **Criterion 4: Community Contribution**

Adult Weighting: **15%** | Youth Weighting: **0%**

- To what extent will the applicant use this opportunity to contribute to community connection and further enrich Aspen's cultural environment?