

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

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More than \$2 million awarded in art, film and history grants

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs awards grants to 176 organizations, projects and individuals

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs today announced it has awarded more than \$2 million in grants for art, film, history and culture. The grant funding comes through several programs overseen by the department’s divisions: the Iowa Arts Council, the State Historical Society of Iowa and Produce Iowa, the state office of film and media production.

The list of grants includes funds to help at-risk youth paint murals in Creston, business owners turn their storefronts into a temporary art gallery in Ames, preservationists fix up the historic Madison County Courthouse in Winterset and filmmakers take three projects “from script to screen” in Fairfield and Des Moines. In addition, much needed operating support funds will help 43 of Iowa's leading nonprofit arts and cultural organizations – recognized as Cultural Leadership Partners by the department – maintain excellence in delivering programs and serving their communities.

In all, the department awarded \$2,018,052 through 176 grants across the state for community initiatives, creative projects, cultural organizations, small businesses and individuals.

“These funds are critical to help sustain arts, film, heritage and cultural vibrancy across the state and showcase Iowa’s world-class cultural programs and destinations with help

from our state's hard-working artists, historic caretakers and creative business owners," said Chris Kramer, director of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs. "It is important that we support our creative economy when this sector needs it more than ever."

Investments in art, film and history help boost quality of life and promote economic growth, which has become especially important in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Shared cultural experiences help people feel connected even when they are physically apart.

"Through this funding we hope to provide cultural experiences in our rural communities and larger cities with a challenge to promote diversity and inclusion," Director Kramer added.

The grants announced today are divided into three broad categories:

Arts & Culture Grants

This year, the Iowa Arts Council awarded \$1,367,984 in grants to 129 projects, organizations and communities – all funded by renewed funding from the Iowa Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, with a \$30,000 increase. Here are just a few examples:

- Kristin Roach received \$5,005 for an exhibition called "Art Vacancy: Downtown Ames" on display now through Aug. 30 along Main Street in Ames. The project supports 12 art installations in 12 downtown storefronts, enabling the public to view art in a safe way, local artists to show and sell their work, and local businesses keep in touch with their patrons.
- Azubuikwe African American Council for the Arts in Davenport received \$10,000 to present the "Urban Exposure Summer Film Program." The program trains low-income and under-served Quad Cities youth, ages 15-22, to write, shoot and edit their own films with help from industry professionals. The resulting films will premiere at the Alternating Currents Film Festival in August at the Figge Museum of Art.
- Creston:Arts received \$10,000 for "Mural Mashup," a project that will hire artists to mentor at-risk students to paint four murals in the alleyways of Uptown

Creston. The project will make the alleys more attractive and connect remote parking areas with shopping areas, to help boost the local economy and enhance the community.

- Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development, Inc., in Postville received \$10,000 to adapt its popular artist studio tours into virtual tours. Called “Northeast Iowa Artists Studio Tour Reimagined,” the new tours will incorporate educational and engagement videos, slideshows and other multimedia elements to help artists share their creative process and sell their work.
- In addition, Iowa Artist Fellowships were awarded to Garth Greenwell of Iowa City, Tiberiu Chelcea and Catherine Reinhart of Ames, and Olivia Valentine and Levi Robb of Des Moines. Each fellow receives a \$10,000 grant plus professional development opportunities to advance their artistic careers.

Learn more about the following Iowa Arts Council grant programs:

[Art Project Grant](#)

[Capacity Building Grant](#)

[Cultural Heritage Project Grant](#)

[Cultural Leadership Partner Operating Support Grant](#)

[Iowa Artist Fellowship](#)

Film & Media Grants

The department awarded \$125,000 in three Greenlight Grants for film and digital media productions that will be produced in Iowa. Now in its second year, this program helps retain Iowa filmmakers in the state to build a more robust film and media industry and share stories that are important to Iowans. The grants can be used to produce features, shorts, pilot episodes or proof-of-concept videos to help Iowans propel a script to the screen. Eligible projects must be ready for production and demonstrate public value. Here are this year's three grant recipients:

- Justin Norman of Des Moines received \$50,000 for the pilot production of "TubeLords," a comedy web television series that examines Internet culture by focusing on a small group of once-popular YouTubers who seek to save their

channel by desperately attempting to chase after current trends.

- Graham Swon of Fairfield received \$50,000 for the feature film "An Evening Song (For Three Voices)," a narrative drama that follows a couple's move from the city to the country and the new romantic and environmental relationships they become intertwined with as a result.
- Charles G. Brewton Jr. of Des Moines received \$25,000 to support the production of "JustUs," a documentary that follows current prisoner Cedric B. Theus as he guides viewers through an intimate look into the lives of a group of formerly incarcerated African American men.

History Grants

The State Historical Society of Iowa awarded \$513,068 in 32 grants for research and projects supported by the Historical Resource Development Program, funded through Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP), to preserve historical collections, invest in communities through historic preservation, and promote Iowa history. Here are a few examples:

- The Madison County Historic Preservation Commission received \$50,000 to preserve the historic Madison County Courthouse. Work will include repairing, repointing and replacing cracked and damaged limestone on the building's exterior.
- The Winneshiek County Historic Preservation Commission received \$4,308 for the Dam Gate Outdoor Industrial Sculpture Exhibit, which will preserve the last remaining dam gate from the historic Lower Dam of Winneshiek County. The exhibit will feature the dam gate structure and an educational interpretive sign.
- Friends of the Davenport Library received \$14,847 to digitize media from the Bix Beiderbecke Museum and World Archives Collection. The grant will be used to hire a company to migrate media to accessible and stable archival formats.
- The Wallace Centers of Iowa near Orient received \$41,055 to repair and improve the farmhouse at Vice President Henry A. Wallace's birthplace farm. Work will include fixing a leaky roof and replacing vinyl-clad windows and cement siding with wood.

- The Franklin County Historical Society received \$17,085 to research, write and nominate the local REA Power Plant as a National Historic Landmark.
- In addition, a dozen historians from across the country each received \$1,000 to research topics ranging from Iowa's first maps to Iowa's Black military veterans. The resulting articles may appear in the Annals of Iowa, the quarterly journal published by the State Historical Society of Iowa.

Learn more about the following State Historical Society of Iowa grant programs:

[Historical Resource Development Program](#)

[Country School Grant Program](#)

[Research Grant for Authors](#)

More information about the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs is available at iowaculture.gov or 515-281-5111.

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The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and its divisions – the State Historical Society of Iowa, including the State Historic Preservation Office; the Iowa Arts Council; and Produce Iowa, the state office of media production – empower Iowans to build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting to the people, places and points of pride that define our state. The department promotes creativity as a catalyst for innovation, empowers Iowans to preserve history, and shares the stories of Iowa to connect past, present and future generations.

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