L.A. Opens Applications to Grants for Artists Affected by COVID-19

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Los Angeles began offering artists in the city the chance to apply for one-time grant of $500 to $1,500 today if they can demonstrate that they've been adversely affected by the coronavirus.

The grants are available until Sept. 1 or until the first 600 applicants have been approved.

The citywide COVID-19 Emergency Response Program for Individual Artists, administered by the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the first COVID-19 relief fund specifically for individual artists.

“Local artists and arts nonprofits are the creative heart of Los Angeles,” Councilman David Ryu said. “The work of writers, musicians, painters and all artists help make Los Angeles the vibrant and dynamic city we love.”

To qualify, artists must demonstrate financial need and detrimental effects caused by COVID-19, such as an inability to pay rent or bills. Funds are available to artists of all kinds, including DJs, writers, visual artists and more, Ryu said.

Artists can apply for the grants at culturela.org/grants-and-calls/citywide-covid-19-emergency-response-program-for-individual-artists/.

The $340,000 fund was created after Ryu introduced a motion seeking to repurpose his council district’s Arts Development Fee fund, money that comes to each council district from commercial developments that can be used to support arts projects, facilities and arts education programs that are free or low-cost and accessible to the public.

Councilmen Gil Cedillo, Bob Blumenfield, Paul Koretz, Marqueece Harris-Dawson, Herb Wesson and Joe Buscaino added their Arts Development Fee fund dollars as well.

“As a creative capital, Los Angeles must ensure that artists are able to access funding to help weather the pandemic, its economic aftermath, and envision a new social contract that places people and community at
“the center,” said Danielle Brazell, the general manager of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Ryu also introduced a motion Wednesday seeking to allocate $20 million in federal coronavirus relief funding to the department to backfill funding gaps and support local arts organizations.