



**Economic Development Collaborative
Creative Sonoma Update
June 2025**

ADMINISTRATION

AFTACON

Creative Sonoma participated in [AFTACON](#), the [Americans for the Arts](#) annual convention, in Cincinnati on June 11-14. Arts and culture workers from across the US gathered to hear about AFTA's commitment to strengthen our nation through the transformative power of arts and culture, experience Cincinnati's vibrant and unified arts sector, and learn from peers about innovative policies and programs.

Hiring

Creative Sonoma received 112 applicants for the Program Officer recruitment! Interviews with top-ranking candidates are scheduled for mid to late June.

ARTS EDUCATION

USC Symposium

Creative Sonoma participated in the [USC Art Education, Research, and Policy Symposium](#) last week in Los Angeles. Experts in music and arts education, neuroscience, child development, and policy presented research and examples of the role in the arts with advancing educational opportunity and supporting student health and well-being. This event was part of [L.A. Arts and Health Week](#).

Action: Learn more about the intersection of arts and health on CS's [General Resources](#) page under "Health."

Reggio Emilia Approach Exhibition & International Conference

Creative Sonoma continues to partner with SCOE to plan for the Reggio event in 2028. The [Mosaic of Marks, Words, Material](#) exhibition and North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA) International Conference will support equitable access to high-quality professional learning opportunities for educators, artists, higher education faculty and students, and members of community-based organizations bridging the Early Learning and Care with the P-3 system to positively impact children's development and outcomes, especially those furthest from justice.

Outreach to School Boards

Support was offered to each of the County's 40 school boards around building arts programs. The offer includes support with information and partnership to help boards use their Prop 28 funds. The 1st year of funds provided to districts will need to be spent by the end of the next school year (SY25-26) or returned to the state.

Action: Reach out to your local school boards and ask how Prop 28 funds are being spent.

GRANT MAKING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

District 5 Community Public Art Project Grants

[Grantees](#) were announced on May 8. Contracting is nearly complete for all grantees and projects are underway. A [webpage](#) for funded projects is now live and includes project dates, locations and how to participate. Also, search for and follow hashtag #D5PublicArt on social media to see project updates.

Emerging Artist Incubator

Applications are now open for Fall 2025, which will be the second artist cohort of the 2025 Emerging Artist Incubator Program. Produced in partnership with Sebastopol Center for the Arts, this program is designed to empower and support talented emerging artists on their journey to establish themselves as successful and sustainable artists by providing professional development. This comprehensive program encompasses various aspects of their careers, from artistic development to financial management and community building. To learn more and to apply click [HERE](#). Deadline to apply is July 30.

PUBLIC ART

Fire Memorial Public Art Project

Since last March, Creative Sonoma staff has worked with City of Santa Rosa staff to negotiate use of Nagasawa Park. Specifically, navigating a policy prohibiting memorials in city parks, including a condition imposed by the City to obtain written permission from all families if individuals' names were possibly going to be included on the memorial. Staff researched typical policies for memorials and standard practices for name inclusion, met with City staff, County Counsel, Regional Parks, and more, receiving consistent feedback on the constraints in including names, both practical and legal, regardless of if the project was located on city property or in a county regional park.

Project goals include honoring those who lost their lives in the fires, reminding Sonoma County of our community's resilience, and serving as a sanctuary for reflection, remembrance, and healing. The Task Force has approached these goals very thoughtfully, and ultimately, as there are significant issues to account for if names are to be included, we are moving forward with the Memorial without the inclusion of individuals' names.

Staff is continuing to work with the City of Santa Rosa on finalizing a Park Master Plan Amendment as well as a License Agreement between the City and County.

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