



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NEVADA COUNTY ARTS & CULTURE MASTER PLAN

Nevada County Arts Council
100 N. Pine Street, Suite C.
Nevada City, CA 95959

IMPORTANT DATES

Advertisement Date: February 28, 2024
Deadline for Written Questions: March 29, 2024, by 5:00pm
Submission Deadline: April 5, 2024, by 5:00pm
Contract Awarded: April 30, 2024
Suggested Completion Date: Within twelve months

INQUIRES

Direct questions or clarifications in writing to Eliza Tudor, Executive Director at eliza@nevadacountyarts.org.
For updates on our cultural planning process, please see the [Arts Master Plan page on our website](#).

INTRODUCTION

Nevada County Arts Council is seeking an experienced cultural planner to develop an Arts & Culture Master Plan for Nevada County and its two state-designated California Cultural Districts. The plan should include a strong and concise vision statement, findings from a broad and inclusive community engagement process, clear and attainable goals and objectives, a comprehensive regional marketing plan, and strategies to sustain and grow funding for the arts.

Our Arts & Culture Master Plan will align with a vision that the lives of all Nevada County residents are enriched through a diverse spectrum of artists and culture bearers and arts and cultural experiences, and that the arts can be a key factor in addressing our community's challenges. The presence of the arts and creativity in daily life revitalizes communities, promoting civic engagement, encouraging collective problem solving, and building bridges across cultures.

ABOUT NEVADA COUNTY: OUR GEOGRAPHY, PEOPLE & INDUSTRIES

Nevada County spans California's "Gold Country" in the west and the High Sierra in the east, bisected by the Donner Pass at over 7,000 feet. Nestled within the dense wilderness of the Tahoe National Forest are three incorporated communities—Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee—and unincorporated areas where artists live and work. With rivers, forests, mountains, valleys and vineyards, Nevada County offers a varied and inspiring landscape for residents and visitors.

With 81% of Nevada County's population identifying as white, our next largest population is Hispanic-Latino at 10% (and a significant 30% of Truckee's population). Nevada County's median age is 50 years old, with nearly a third of our residents aged 65 and over. Nevada County is home to a number of indigenous tribes that include the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan, the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and the Tsi Akim Maidu Tribe. Please refer to Nevada County Arts Council's [Racial Equity](#) page for more information about our efforts to confront and challenge structural racism.

Nevada County's major economic sectors include Health Care and Social Assistance, Construction, and Retail Trade. Sectors with high "Location quotients" (LQs)—those in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average—include Utilities (LQ = 2.99), Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (2.16), and Construction (1.96).

Other significant economic sectors in recent history include tourism, technology and manufacturing, agriculture, and government. Though we have a significant non-profit sector, including many arts organizations, real pay inequities prevail between this sector and local government.

Our recent *Arts & Economic Prosperity* study, measuring 2022-23 data, reveals that Nevada County's broader creative sector is a \$66m industry—one that supports close to 1,400 FTE jobs and which generates \$13m in federal, state and local government revenue annually. Nevertheless, it is one under constant strain, as pandemic era funding is spent, and revenue sources common to urban spaces are virtually non-existent.

While our ski slopes, outdoor recreation and agricultural attractions contribute to Nevada County's economy, our changing climate continues to significantly impact these industries as precipitation and snowpack become less reliable and the landscape is increasingly at risk of catastrophic wildfires.

Additionally, skyrocketing visitation to our outdoor recreation sites during the pandemic has resulted in a significant strain on our waterways and trails, and contributed to safety concerns due to lack of infrastructure such as parking and restrooms. Thus, our Cultural Districts as destinations may provide new opportunities to reduce our reliance on snow-based and year-round recreational tourism.

ABOUT NEVADA COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL & OUR CULTURAL DISTRICTS

As the county's designated [State-Local Partner](#) with California Arts Council, by resolution of the County of Nevada's Board of Supervisors, Nevada County Arts Council facilitates collaborative efforts that promote and sustain the arts in order to advance the cultural, social, and economic health of our community. As Nevada County's umbrella organization for the arts, we serve as convenors, consultants, researchers, strategists, advocates, supporters, funders, promoters, policy wonks, and general arts and culture cheerleaders for our community.

In 2017, following a competitive process, the State of California designated the twin cities of Nevada City and Grass Valley (GVNC), and the town of Truckee, as two of just fourteen state-designated inaugural California Cultural Districts.

California Cultural Districts are established around the central tenet of creative placemaking, which requires intersectoral partnerships between local government (including special districts), the business sector, and the Arts. Our Cultural District partners include the Cities of Grass Valley and Nevada City, Grass Valley Chamber, Grass Valley Downtown Association, Nevada City Chamber, the Town of Truckee, Truckee Arts Alliance, Truckee Downtown Merchants Association, and Truckee Chamber.

Both GVNC and Truckee Cultural District were redesignated by the State in 2023 for an additional five years. With this redesignation came funding for staffing and cultural planning for just three of the five years. As part of the State's inaugural cohort of Districts, Nevada County Arts Council and its partners have a tremendous responsibility to demonstrate the efficacy of the Cultural District program in meeting the State of California's goals to grow and sustain authentic grassroots arts and cultural opportunities, increase the visibility of local artists, nourish community participation in local arts and culture, promote socioeconomic and ethnic diversity, and work against by-products of placemaking such as gentrification, displacement, and racism.

Though our designated Cultural Districts are centered around Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee, our Arts & Culture Master Plan should be inclusive of all five of Nevada County's supervisorial districts, including our unincorporated communities. More information on our Cultural Districts can be found [here](#).

ARTS & CULTURE MASTER PLAN VISION & GOALS

Nevada County's first-ever Arts & Culture Master Plan ("the Plan") will advance arts, culture, and creativity for the benefit of Nevada County residents. The Plan should:

1. Assess the geography, historic context, and current state of arts and culture in Nevada County, including necessary updates to our [cultural asset map](#).
2. Be responsive to widespread input from Nevada County residents and stakeholders.
3. Align with existing municipal and County plans and planning processes.
4. Identify avenues of funding and opportunities for partnership to stabilize the arts and culture sector and maximize resources.
5. Align municipal investments in arts and culture with City and County goals and priorities in areas such as affordable housing, public safety, economic development, climate mitigation, emergency preparedness and disaster response, recreation, and mobility.
6. Identify career pathways and workforce development opportunities in the arts and culture sector.
7. Identify strategies to advance and integrate cultural equity for all Nevada County residents. (Learn more about our work towards Cultural Equity [here](#)).
8. Recognize the importance of arts advocacy and inspire cultural leaders, creatives, volunteers, and audiences to flex their individual and collective power to protect and advance the arts.
9. Include a regional marketing plan that promotes sustainable cultural tourism, acknowledges the value of local participation, and aligns with the County of Nevada's upcoming "Live-Work-Play" marketing campaign.

Nevada County Arts Council believes its cultural planning process is an opportunity to produce a cutting-edge and actionable plan that highlights Nevada County's roots as a place of creative innovation, and which positions arts and culture as a key economic and social driver, with investment that reflects this.

SCOPE OF WORK & PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Project Management

In consultation with Nevada County Arts Council staff, consultant will develop a project work plan, including a timeline, activities, and a detailed outreach and engagement strategy. Consultant will schedule and facilitate meetings, manage communications, create agendas, prepare materials, and provide progress updates. Meetings may occur in person and virtually.

Awareness Campaign

In partnership with Nevada County Arts Council staff, consultant will lead a broad awareness campaign for the cultural planning process, including a dedicated website, press releases, and advertisements to engage the community in the cultural planning process.

Community Convening and Information Gathering

Consultant will plan, develop, lead, and document an inclusive, accessible, bi-lingual (English and Spanish) effort to gather community input related to arts and culture. Tools and techniques may include community surveys, events, key informant interviews, and focus groups. Consultant will plan for and provide accommodations if requested, including, but not limited to American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, real-time captioning, large print documents, and translation services.

Consultant will convene the community across various sectors, including:

- Arts organizations, creative producers, and their audiences; artists and culture bearers; and cultural workers.
- Tribal authorities, and local government, including the County, municipalities, special districts.
- Businesses, including the hospitality, retail, and service sectors.
- Social service organizations
- Education
- Healthcare

Consultant will identify and engage historically underrepresented communities, including those who may not currently have access to arts and cultural opportunities due to factors such as age, race, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, geography, language, and socio-economic conditions.

Recognizing that Eastern and Western Nevada County are two unique communities, the consultant will tailor its approach to ensure the community engagement process meets stakeholders where they are.

Arts & Culture Master Plan

The consultant will produce a detailed written Arts & Culture Master Plan document to include the following:

- Executive Summary
- Background on the arts and culture in Nevada County
- Overview of the methodology used to create the plan
- A community-wide vision for the long-term future of arts and culture in Nevada County
- Achievable short- and long-term goals and recommendations tailored to meet the specific needs of our various communities, including those on both the east and west side of the County.
- Prioritized and phased implementation strategy with defined roles for all stakeholders.
- A comprehensive regional marketing plan for the arts that aligns with existing campaigns and can be leveraged by all partners.
- An implementation toolkit for arts organizations, collaboratives and collectives

Presentation of Plan

Consultant will prepare and conduct informational presentations to Nevada City City Council, Grass Valley City Council, Truckee Town Council, and the Nevada County Board of Supervisors summarizing the findings and action steps outlined in the final report.

BUDGET

The maximum all-inclusive project fee is \$120,000. The amount is inclusive of all costs incurred, related to, or in performance of the project.

SCHEDULE

Nevada County Arts Council is requesting that the consultant provide a project schedule that results in the final deliverables within an approximate timeframe of twelve months of the contract award.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Consultant must have:

- Previous experience of successfully facilitating public engagement processes
- Previous experience conducting arts and cultural planning processes and completing written reports and recommendations.
- Practical knowledge of and experience with formally recognized cultural districts will be an advantage.
- Ability to engage a wide variety of community stakeholders in accessible formats, including in respondents' first language.
- Sensitivity to local issues and local ways of defining and measuring those issues, including the lived experience of artists and culture bearers, and their communities.
- Experience identifying divergent needs across communities that may require different action plans.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Proposals shall include the following:

1. Cover Letter – This should be on company letterhead and provide the name and complete contact information for the project lead. The letter must be signed by an individual who is authorized to enter into a binding contractual agreement.
2. Company/Team Description – Please provide the following:
 - a. Description of the company/team, including the year the company/team was established, the types of services offered, the legal structure, the number of employees, and the location of the office that would be conducting the work.
 - b. Description of the company/team's experience and qualifications in performing work similar to the work solicited by this RFP.
 - c. Key personnel who will be assigned to this project, relevant experience and depth of knowledge, a description of their responsibilities, and the anticipated time that each person will devote to this project.
 - d. If this is a joint venture, explain the responsibilities of each company/team/subconsultant, the location of each company/team, and the key personnel.
 - e. Description of experience working with arts agencies, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Please include specialized experience and professional competence in areas directly related to this RFP.
 - f. Description of experience working with historically underrepresented communities.
 - g. Description of experience working on projects that have had direct impacts on arts and culture, including any work concerning formally recognized cultural districts.
3. References – Provide a minimum of three references, including the name, title, and contact information of the person(s) at the client organization who is most knowledgeable about the work performed.
4. Detailed Work Plan – Provide a narrative that addresses the Scope of Work outlined above, including:
 - a. A description of the proposed approach and methodology for completing the services specified in the Scope of Work.
 - b. Key personnel and sub-consultants (if applicable) assigned to specified tasks.
 - c. A schedule of project milestones.
5. Cost Estimate – Provide a budget broken down by task and deliverable. The total consultant budget is considered to be inclusive of all fees and expenses (e.g., travel expenses, printing, reproduction, postage, etc.), which will be generated by the consultant and any subconsultants to complete the work described in the approved Scope of Work. Indicate the hourly billing rates for all individuals involved, miscellaneous billing costs, and the fee structure for additional work beyond the contract scope.
6. Schedule – Provide a proposed schedule for each task, assuming the contract will be awarded by April 30, 2024.

7. Work Examples – Provide examples of at least two comparable projects that the project manager and principal staff worked on within the last five years, including pertinent details.
8. Conflicts of Interest – Please disclose any financial, business, or other relationship with the GVNC Cultural District, Truckee Cultural District, and/or Nevada County Arts Council that may have an impact on the outcome of this project. The prospective consultant shall also list current clients who may have a financial interest in the outcome of this project.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Submittal Format and Method – All proposals are required to be submitted electronically in PDF format via email to Eliza Tudor at eliza@nevadacountyarts.org. Please include in subject line: **Arts & Culture Master Plan RFP**. Also include name and contact information.
2. Submittal Deadline – Submitted proposals shall be received by Nevada County Arts Council no later than 5:00 pm on March 29, 2024. It is the sole responsibility of the proposer to ensure timely delivery. Late proposals and additions shall not be considered.
3. Questions and Requests for Clarifications – Proposers may submit questions or formal requests for clarification on the RFP via email to eliza@nevadacountyarts.org. In submitting questions, please include in subject line: **Arts & Culture Master Plan Questions**. The deadline to submit questions and request clarification is 5:00 pm on March 15, 2024.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated by Nevada County Arts Council and Cultural District staff.

1. Evaluation – The following criteria are among those that will be used to evaluate the submitted proposals:
 - Quality and responsiveness of the proposal.
 - Demonstration of the consultant’s understanding of the project objectives.
 - Qualifications and experience of the staff assigned to the project. If this is proposed to be a joint venture with a subconsultant(s), the track record of the team members’ experience working together.
 - Record of completing similar projects on schedule and within budget.
 - Review of references.
 - Cost of preparing the final plan in relation to the services offered.
2. Interviews – The top candidates may be invited to interview with the Nevada County Arts Council after the submission deadline. We anticipate, but do not guarantee, that the top three candidates will be interviewed; however, the interview process may be waived altogether at the Nevada County Arts Council’s sole discretion. Top candidate interviews may be in person or virtual.
3. Reference Checks – Nevada County Arts Council staff will check references for the top candidate(s).

CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

The selected consultant will be required to sign an agreement for professional services provided by Nevada County Arts Council. Prior to contract execution and initiation of work on the project, the consultant shall meet Nevada County Arts Council indemnification requirements as well as insurance coverage requirements, including specified limits for general liability, professional liability, automotive liability, and worker's compensation insurance.