

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: August 9, 2022

To: The Mayor
The City Council

From: 
Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer

Subject: **INNOVATION FUND RECOMMENDATION – CREATIVE LICENSE: ONLINE CLASS REGISTRATION SERVICE DESIGN**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Establish and appropriate a new appropriation account entitled Department of Cultural Affairs – Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design in the amount of \$75,000 within the Innovation Fund No. 105/10 from the available cash balance of the Innovation Fund.
2. Transfer \$75,000 from the Innovation Fund No. 105/10, Account to be Established, Department of Cultural Affairs – Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design to Fund No. 844/30 as follows:

<u>Fund/Dept.</u>	<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
844/30	To Be Established	Creative License: Class Registration Service Design	\$75,000

3. Instruct the Department of Cultural Affairs to:
 - a. Separately track all encumbrances and expenditures of Innovation Fund monies so that unspent funds can be returned to the Innovation Fund at the end of the fiscal year;
 - b. Report to the Innovation and Performance Commission with an accounting of the funds, the lessons learned, and any obstacles faced;
 - c. Report to the Innovation and Performance Commission if, after the receipt of funds, the scope of the funded item differs from the scope approved for funding by the Mayor and the City Council; and,
 - d. As appropriate, include acknowledgement of the Innovation and Performance Commission on public materials, such as press releases or websites that reference the Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design.
4. Authorize the City Administrative Officer to make technical corrections as necessary to those transactions included in this report to implement Mayor and Council intentions.

SUMMARY

The City Administrative Officer herewith transmits the recommendation of the Innovation and Performance Commission (IPC) to approve funding in the amount of \$75,000 from the Innovation Fund (IF) for the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) – Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design pilot. Please note, as with all IPC recommendations, this report presents the idea as submitted by the Department and approved by the IPC along with the necessary recommendations to implement the idea as presented. If the scope of the Innovation Fund item changes after the Department receives funding, the Department must return to the IPC to present the revised scope to the Commission to determine whether alternative recommendations are required.

To meet Mayor Garcetti’s Executive Directives 27 and 29, “Equity in City Government,” and “Contactless and People-Centered City Initiative,” DCA is proposing the Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design, an online registration system piloted at eight of DCA’s Art Centers located within the City. Currently, DCA uses an analog process, involving staff’s manual input and storage of registrant information, as well as the collection of fees through cash or check. DCA states that, on an annual basis, thousands of students attend class sessions during the year for in-person classes and the Department has tens of thousands of students register for in-person classes annually. Through this pilot, DCA proposes a functioning, creative solution that redesigns the user journey of class registration and provides staff with centralized data. This pilot will eliminate the need for staff to manually enter data, and will allow for the printing of class rosters, attendance tracking, and demographic analysis, along with other benefits.

In addition, DCA states that this pilot will improve service delivery at its Art Centers, save money due to the reduction in personnel time required for large in-person registration, and allow for centralized access to digital registration data for the entire network of Arts Centers. Having centralized digital registration data will allow for efficient data analysis as needed for operational reports, such as the annual National Community Arts Guild, a federal database that requires DCA to provide operational and fiscal data annually for its Community Arts Division. Additionally, DCA Administration will benefit from instant access to facility attendance reports and demographic data, for which annual updates are required for the budget submission process.

DCA intends to hire a part-time Arts Associate from an existing list of as-needed employees. The eight Arts Centers will be organized into two cohorts, working successively to leverage peer knowledge and shared experience to inform the customization and implementation of the registration system. The pilot’s success will be determined by the following measures:

- Reduction in staff hours required for class registration data entry and management
- Improved user experience for class enrollment
- Simplifying payment and payment processing
- Increase in enrollment
- Survey of staff and community members to collect qualitative feedback
- Comparison of new and old metrics to identify qualitative impact

The IPC recommends \$75,000 for the DCA – Creative License: Online Class Registration Service Design pilot. The pilot has a projected 18-month timeline, at the end of which the City will have an initial operational system serving all of the Community Arts Centers as well as a community of staff users able to steward its ongoing maintenance and refinement. When this project concludes DCA will need to identify resources to license the software annually, to maintain the platform, and to retain a part-time Arts Associate employed to manage the Class Registration System on an ongoing basis.

Following is breakdown of the pilot cost:

- \$10,000 Software Licensing
- \$40,000 Customization, backend development, and design integration with the DCA website
- \$25,000 Part-time Arts Associate
- **\$75,000 Total**

Through centralizing the class registration process, DCA anticipates achieving benefits through standardization across all of its Arts Centers as well as significant cost savings as staff are able to focus work hours on programmatic and educational activities instead of administrative duties. This standardization will expand access to community members seeking to participate in Arts Center programming with the goal of increasing the number of people served. At the same time, a standardized database with robust user data will allow DCA to generate in-depth insights and metrics to help the Department learn more about who it is serving and how registrants can best be served by DCA's programs. DCA suggests that there is difficulty in quantifying true cost savings generated from the pilot because the current system is decentralized and analog.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Approval of these recommendations will allocate \$75,000 of the remaining \$1,408,612 Innovation Fund 2022-23 available balance. The \$75,000 will be transferred to the Department of Cultural Affairs to begin implementation of the pilot project that has been approved by the Innovation and Performance Commission. In some cases, departments will incur ongoing costs.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendations of this report are in compliance with the City's Financial Policies as Innovation Fund monies are being utilized for an eligible project which will improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of City service through innovation, productivity, and performance measurement.