

**Agency Mission**

To strengthen the cultural, educational, and economic vitality of Pennsylvania's communities through the arts.

**Overarching Value:****Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Promote equitable access for all Pennsylvanians to participate fully in a creative life and in the diverse forms of arts and culture in the commonwealth.

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# PA Council on the Arts

## CREATIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (CCI) PROGRAM OVERVIEW + PROJECT SITES

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## CREATIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (CCI) PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Description

The Creative Communities Initiative (CCI) provides multi-year funding for place-based, community-driven, arts-based projects that serve as catalysts for social cohesion, livability, and community and economic development. Commonly referred to as creative placemaking, these projects are rooted in deep community engagement and authentically engage artists, culture bearers, designers, and community members through conversation, cultivation, and creation activities to address community needs, challenges, and opportunities.

### How can your community apply to the next round of CCI community selection?

The next CCI selection period will begin in the fall of 2022.

**Contact Sarah Merritt, PCA's Director of Pennsylvania Creative Communities at [skmerritt@pa.gov](mailto:skmerritt@pa.gov)** to receive information about future CCI funding rounds and related opportunities.

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## What are the requirements of CCI projects?

- Projects must be place-based.
- Projects are managed by at least two community organizations, one of which serves as the lead applicant.
- The lead applicant organization must be a unit of government, nonprofit 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 organization).
- The lead applicant organization must be located in the community.
- Projects have the support of the community's local government via an adopted resolution and pledge of at least 10% of matching funds (in-kind or cash).

## What makes a great CCI project?

The PCA recognizes that each community is a unique with its own history, traditions, assets (people and places), traumas and triumphs, and opportunities, and challenges. For this reason, CCI projects are also unique to each community. Successful projects are of, by, and for the community and can utilize any artistic discipline to create change by addressing a wide variety of community issues including, but not limited to, economic development, the environment, safety, transportation, housing, health, beautification, social justice, and social cohesion.

## Key elements of successful CCI projects:

- Projects are of, by and for the community.
- Commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.
- Projects that include, amplify, and support diverse populations that have been historically, marginalized, misrepresented, and ignored.
- Community-driven, employing deep and inclusive community engagement practices throughout the project.
- Authentically engage artists, designers, and culture bearers in planning and implementation of projects.
- Strength of the partnering organizations. Partners have shared values and can demonstrate a history of successful collaborations to execute impactful community work.
- Beneficial impact on the community.
- Engage existing community assets (people and places).
- Partners leverage additional sources of funding (government, private sector, foundation).

# Current CCI Project Sites and Details

**Project location:** Allentown, Lehigh County

**Project title:** [Cultural Coalition of Allentown](#) |

**Project period:** 2021-2025

**Project description:** In partnership with the Community Action Development Corporation of Allentown (CADCA) and working with local artists, creative entrepreneurs, and youth the project builds from 5 years of community engagement, research, and pilot programs in the center city region of Allentown. The Artist-Neighbor Growth & Opportunity Project (TANGO) is committed to providing artistic and cultural solutions to urban challenges including poverty, housing, and quality of life in the city through a 4-pronged strategy over the next 4 years addressing: Affordable Quality Housing, Creative Economy & Entrepreneurship, cultural Infrastructure and Community Building.

**Lead partner:** Cultural Coalition of Allentown

**Project partners:**

- Community Action Development Corporation of Allentown
- City of Allentown

**Project location:** Corry, Erie County

**Project title:** [Impact Corry](#) | **Project period:** 2021-2025

**Project description:** The development of the Corry Rails + Trails Park and enhancement of the downtown Corry business corridor to include community-driven public art (permanent and temporary), local artist design infrastructure elements, an annual festival, and support programs to attract, support, and retain creative small businesses to the community. The focus of the projects is the celebration and promotion of the community's industrial heritage, spirit of innovative entrepreneurship, and resiliency.

**Lead partner:** Impact Corry

**Project partners:**

- Ben Franklin Technology Partners
- City of Corry
- Corry Blues Zones
- City of Corry,
- Corry Chamber of Commerce
- Corry Area Arts Council
- Corry Area School District
- Corry Area Historical Society
- Corry Community Foundation
- Corry RAILS
- Corry Tree Committee
- Corry Young Professionals
- Downtown Corry Business Association
- Edinboro University
- Erie Arts & Culture
- Erie County Housing Department
- Erie County Department of Planning
- Erie to Pittsburgh & Industrial Trails Coalition
- Integrated Design

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- Jefferson Educational Society
- Northwestern PA Trail Association
- Penn State Behrend
- Village Friends

## **Project location:** Hill District, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County

**Project title:** [New Granada Square](#) | **Project period:** 2021 – 2025

**Project description:** Leveraging the Hill District's community-driven masterplan, which calls for building upon the African American cultural legacy to create a clear economic future for the neighborhood, the Hill CDC and its partners will implement arts-strategies to support and promote a vibrant arts and culture economy in the district by providing affordable artist housing and commercial space, connecting generations through its rich cultural history, supporting and cultivating local talent, and weaving African American culture into the built environment.

**Lead partner:** Hill Community Development Corporation

**Project partners:**

- City of Pittsburgh  
Department of City  
Planning
- Greater Pittsburgh Arts  
Council
- University of Pittsburgh
- #ArtsinHD

## **Project location:** Indiana, Indiana County

**Project title:** [Creative Spaces Collective](#) | **Project period:** 2021-2025

**Project description:** Led by the Creative Spaces Collective of Indiana County, a network of local arts organizations, artists, and community members, the project supports local artist development, community arts education activities, and community-driven public art projects through an artist peer partnership program and community programming to foster social cohesion, local artist capacity building, and community pride.

**Lead partner:** Indiana County Commissioners Office of Planning & Development

**Project partners:**

- Creative Spaces Collective
- Spruce Arts Residencies
- Indiana Arts Council of  
Pennsylvania
- Indiana University of  
Pennsylvania
- Artists Hand Gallery
- Clark Gallery
- Dripped in the Road
- River Valley School District
- Blairsville Borough Council
- Blairsville Community  
Development Authority
- Indiana Co. Conservation District

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**Project location:** Lancaster City, Lancaster County

**Project title:** [Seed Project](#) | **Project period:** 2020-2024

**Project description:** A partnership of the Spanish American Civic Association, Millersville University, artists and organizations of the Seed Project, and Lancaster City, the project supports community-based arts programming in the Southeast neighborhood of Lancaster. The project employs a team of artists representative of the predominately Latinx, African American, and refugee community members to work with neighborhood residents to identify and address community opportunities and challenges to inform and implement community-lead artworks and projects and identify and cultivate new collaborations.

**Lead partner:** Spanish American Civic Association (SACA)

**Project partners:**

- Millersville University
- Seed Project
- The Mix at Arbor Place
- The Taino Cultural Center
- Lancaster Equity
- School District of Lancaster
- Boys and Girls Club
- TCP Network
- Mustafa Nuur
- Thaddeus Stevens College
- LGBTQ+ Coalition
- Pennsylvania College of Art and Design
- Communications Essentials
- Church World Services
- Speak to My Soul/Concrete Rose
- Southeast Times
- We are Casa
- Community Action Partnership

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**Project location:** Meadville, Crawford County

**Project title:** [ARC Community Greenspace](#) |

**Project period:** 2020-2024

**Project description:** Transformation of a vacant lot, located in Meadville's historic business district, into an inclusive community greenspace. The greenspace will include community-designed public art, environmental interventions to address stormwater management and Mill Creek daylighting, and planning and implementation of community arts activities. The focus of the project is to support and advance inclusion and community connectedness for community members with physical and developmental disabilities.

**Lead partner:** The ARC of Crawford County

**Project partners:**

- Art & Environment
- City of Meadville
- Allegheny College
- Meadville Council on the Arts

**Project location:** Mifflin Square Park/7th Street Corridor, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County

**Project title:** [Community Development Projects](#) |

**Project period:** 2020 - 2024

**Project description:** Located in one of Philadelphia's most diverse neighborhoods and centered on Mifflin Square Park and the 7<sup>th</sup> Street business corridor, the partners, in collaboration with community members and elders to plan and execute community-lead public art projects and infuse art and design into neighborhood infrastructure and business improvements. The project embraces the neighborhoods diverse cultures to inform public art installations with wayfinding signage to tie the commercial corridor to the park. Additionally, the project includes creative programs that engage neighborhood youth and elders with the goal of the building a stronger sense of place.

**Lead partner:** Southeast Asian Mutual Assistance Associations Coalition (SEAMAAC)

**Project partners:**

- Hip Hop Heritage
- Mural Arts Philadelphia

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**Project location:** Sharon, Mercer County

**Project title:** [Valley Fab Lab](#) | **Project period:** 2020-2024

**Project description:** Implementation, and programming of a community, arts-based, co-work, micro-business incubator, and retail space, with an emphasis on serving community members with physical and intellectual disabilities and veterans. The Valley Fab Lab, a partnership of the Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce, Whole Life Services, Gannon University Small Business Development Center, Random Acts of Artists, and the City of Sharon, provides access to equipment, training, retail opportunities, small business development, and creative entrepreneur support.

**Lead partner:** Shenango Valley Chamber of Commerce

**Project partners:**

- Whole Life Services
- Gannon University Small Business Development Center
- Random Acts of Artists
- City of Sharon

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# ABOUT THE 2022 CREATIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (CCI) MINI-GRANT PROGRAM + RECIPIENTS LIST

## Description

Since 2019, PCA has supported community-driven, arts-based community and economic development work (aka “creative placemaking”) through its Creative Communities Initiative (CCI). The program has already attracted more than 160 letters of interest and hundreds of inquiries. This, coupled with the program’s modest budget, make CCI very competitive.

Today, communities are increasingly looking for ways to advance recovery and resilience efforts and reconnect and activate their creative placemaking work. In order to encourage this work, despite limited program funds availability, PCA created an avenue whereby CCI applicant communities that previously demonstrated a strong commitment to this work and received favorable review by the selection panel could receive modest “mini-grants.” As an additional benefit, mini-grant project recipients may qualify for ongoing participation in CCI going forward, based on work conducted through these grant awards.

## 2022 CCI Mini-Grant Recipients

Organization	Location	Amount
Riverlife	Allegheny County	\$3,500
Rivers of Steel	Allegheny County	\$3,500
Aliquippa Impact	Beaver County	\$3,500
ArtsAltoona	Blair County	\$3,500
Chester County Art Association	Chester County	\$3,500
Carlisle Regional Performing Arts Center	Cumberland County	\$3,500
Erie Neighborhood Growth Partnership	Erie County	\$3,500
Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress	Luzerne County	\$3,500
Community Partnerships RC&D	Mifflin County	\$3,500
Mosaic Community Land Trust	Montgomery County	\$3,500
Greater Easton Development Partnership	Northampton County	\$3,500
Nazareth Center for the Arts/ Cultural & Arts Commission	Northampton County	\$3,500
Olney Culture Lab of CultureTrust of Greater Philadelphia	Philadelphia County	\$3,500
Philadelphia Folklore Project	Philadelphia County	\$3,500
Walk-In Art Center	Schuylkill County	\$3,500
Washington Business District	Washington County	\$3,500
Westmoreland Community Action	Westmoreland County	\$3,500
Partnership for Economic Development of York County	York County	\$3,500
Community Giving Foundation/Berwick Arts Fund	Columbia County	\$7,000
Barrio Alegria	Berks County	\$7,000
ARC Human Services	Washington County	\$7,000
Lewisburg Downtown Partnership	Union County	\$7,000
GPAC/Arts Excursions	Allegheny County	\$7,000