

Applicant: Arts Collaborative of Nevada County, Nevada City, CA

Project: Tribute Trail Environment Art Project

Attachment 2: Tribute Trail Environment Art Project (TTEAP) Narrative

a. Budget: We are requesting a grant of \$25,000 from the NEA's OurTown program in support of the TTEAP's total budget of \$65,000. This grant would include funds for artist and jury stipends, artist in residence stipends, brochures, a catalog, advertising and signage, educational outreach (including a video and distribution), office supplies, insurance and administration (more detail is provided on the Project Budget page). We will match this grant with \$40,000 from cash and grants from individual donors, foundations, businesses, and our City and County governments. Although the requested grant exceeds NCARTS' 2012 operating budget of \$42,350, we are confident that NCARTS can undertake this project. In the past three years we have successfully managed six \$10-20,000 grants. In addition, we will partner with The Sierra Fund who will provide administrative support and financial management advice for the project. The Sierra Fund has a long history of managing large and complex projects, including federal grants. Further, more than 20 community and national organizations support this project and are committed to sustaining the project's funding goals.

b. Major Project Activities: The Tribute Trail Environmental Art Project (TTEAP)

Background: Town-centered planning is unlike current rural development patterns dominated by sprawl; it involves high density development in existing towns with a sharp dividing line between these concentrated areas and the surrounding rural and wilderness areas. This type of development also attempts to provide recreational, cultural, economic and educational links between the constructed downtown areas and surrounding natural areas. Over the last decade, our rural town, Nevada City, has

taken steps toward town-centered planning and is on the way towards being a model for this alternative development path.

As an example, the recently completed first phase of the Deer Creek Tribute Trail now links the city's downtown historic and economic area with the surrounding natural features through a stunning nine-mile river parkway that starts and ends in Nevada City, and spans Deer Creek with one pedestrian bridge and another under development. Through involvement of Native American Tribes and representatives of the Chinese pioneers, the trail pays tribute to these important, but often under-representative groups in our gold mining history through interpretative features. The Tribute Trail Environmental Art Project (TTEAP) is a public art project which leverages the work completed on the Tribute Trail described above. Although the Tribute Trail has initiated a deeper understanding of the linkages between culture, environment and economics, this broad partnership is seeking the assistance of our talented artistic community to further catalyze a persuasive vision of our place, our town - one that acknowledges the original inhabitants of our watershed, the legacy of the Gold Mining Era, the cultural diversity that shaped our town, the beauty of our mountains and rivers, and the innovative and vibrant spirit of our rural people. This effort will also challenge the conventional static notion of California's Gold Country as a place frozen in time and will engage innovative ideas and concepts about the relationship of the past, present and future.

TTEAP will continue the collaborative work already begun by the environmental and historic organizations that serve the town, and extend that work to include the arts community and schools, allowing our rural town to take an important step into creative placemaking by bringing together the diverse people and natural environments of this place into a fusion of nature, people, history and art. The project is closely aligned with NCArts' mission and Nevada City's development and sustainability goals. Engaging the Community. Not only has the planning associated with this project engaged the public and the community, but also the implementation is designed to do the same. Inspired by other

environmentally based art installation projects, and most recently by San Francisco's *The Presidio Habitats* – the first site-based art exhibition conceived for a National Park, NC Arts began conversations with the City and stakeholders in the Deer Creek Tribute Trail Project. The idea to incorporate place-based, public art into the trail was greeted with much enthusiasm. With significant community input, NC Arts developed a vision statement, created the TTEAP Steering Committee, an organizational chart, and business and fundraising plans.

Action Plan: We envision multiple phases and other trails and parks for this project in the future but in this first phase, TTEAP will facilitate the creation of 15 temporary environmental artworks, designed by regional artists and installed along the Deer Creek Tribute Trail on publically owned land. These artworks will be created to celebrate the unique characteristics of the creek, educate the public about the watershed past, present and future, and foster stewardship for the creek and its environmental issues.

More specifically, the project will first prepare specific design criteria and issue an RFQ. Amongst other criteria, the artworks will be required to evoke an awareness of the uniqueness of this place and a desire to share some aspect or discovery of it with others. Artworks that provide an avenue for public participation will be encouraged. A resource panel of expert naturalists, environmentalists and historians will be made available to the artists and collaborators as they create their individual site-specific works of art. In response to the RFQ, artists and collaborators will be asked to submit images of their works. Artists will then be chosen by a jury of three experts (an art gallery owner and two museum curators) based on the quality and appropriateness of the work submitted. The artists and groups will receive stipends for materials and installation costs. At least 15 artworks will be installed along the trail in June 2013.

In addition, we will develop a detailed marketing and communications plan to accompany the development and installation of the artworks. We will provide specific outreach to the Foothills Nisenan of the Nevada City Rancheria, Chinese Quarter Society, Nevada City School of the Arts, Yuba River

Charter School, Nevada Union High School and Sierra College to contribute and/or collaborate on artworks. A celebration event including an exhibition of drawings and maquettes will be held just prior to the first public viewing of the trail's artworks. Our educational plans also include an interpretation of artworks through presentations, docent-led tours, printed materials, blogs, podcasts and smart phone apps that will serve as educational outreach to the community and beyond. In addition, three of the artists, selected by the jury, will be asked to serve as "artists in residence" to teach, lecture and interact with local groups of stakeholders, civic leaders, students and educators. A filmmaker will be engaged to document the artists' process and the community's involvement. From this footage, a video will be created and distributed to the media, schools and film festivals in order to increase the reach of the project's vision and goals.

c. Outcomes and Measurements: The TTEAP project will directly address NEA's OurTown program outcome: "Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts." Below, we describe expected long-term outcomes, project level measurements and targets. These outcomes are designed to be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-phased.

d. Schedule: The TTEAP Steering Committee has created a detailed and realistic action plan that includes specific tasks and subtasks, deliverables for each task, a schedule of each deliverable – details that are critical to ensure that the project will be implemented in a timely manner. The project-planning phase will begin on June 1, 2012. The artworks will be installed in June 2013 and removed by June 2014. The first year will be used for pre-project monitoring, planning and implementing the artworks (June 2012-June 2013) and will include monthly steering committee meetings, finalizing workplans and budget, creating artist contracts, submitting financial and performance reports, publicizing the RFQ, jurying and selecting the works, selecting the sites, securing the permits, installing the artworks, photographing and

filming the artists' process, creating the catalog, organizing the exhibition and opening, and planning for the second year. The second year will include education, outreach and measurement of impact post project (June 2013-June 2014) and the distribution of the video, bringing content to the schools and community organizations, educating docents and volunteers (who will provide tours), creating and implementing content for the podcasts, website and blogs.

e. Partners, key organizations and individuals: The two primary partners are Nevada County Arts (the California Arts Council and Nevada County Board of Supervisors' designated arts council for the County) and The City of Nevada City. NC Arts and the TTEAP Steering Committee will provide overall leadership for the project, including art coordination, marketing, community relations, education and logistics. The artists selected will meet the criteria as established by the TTEAP Steering Committee, Jurors and Advisors. The City will provide meeting space, advice and resources for installation of the artworks, and the land where artworks are installed. The Sierra Fund will provide project administration support. The TTEAP Advisors, including Cheryl Haines, who created and implemented *The Presidio Habitats* project, will provide advice throughout the project. Other Advisors will provide expertise for securing resources, educational tools and economic impact studies. Bio's for Steering Committee members and Advisors are included in Attachment 5.

In addition to the implementing partners, committees and advisors described above the project is supported by a team who already has over a decade of experience working together while designing and building the Deer Creek Tribute Trail. This partnership is an efficient and effective means of communicating across organizations and neighborhoods. These additional partners include: American Rivers, Bear Yuba Land Trust, Bureau of Land Management, California Conservation Corps, Chinese Quarter Society, Foothills Nisenan of the Nevada City Rancheria, Forest Trails Alliance, Greater Champion Neighborhood Association, National Park Service, Nevada City Chamber of Commerce and

Downtown Association, Nevada City School of the Arts, Nevada County, Nevada County Economic Resource Council, Save Our Historic Canals, Sierra Streams Institute and Yuba River Charter School. To date we have received letters of commitment from 10 of these organizations (Attachment 10).

f. The target community: The Tribute Trail is currently used by hundreds of local residents, children and tourists who come to the area to explore this unique and lovely town. The TTEAP will be the first effort in our rural region to bring art and nature together in a way that is both collaborative and creative. Nevada County citizens are the primary community and visitors are the secondary community who will benefit from this project. The population of Nevada County is 98,764; the per capita income is \$31,000; 10% live below the poverty level; 19% are under 18 and 18.6% are over 65; 8.5% are Hispanic or Latino; and 1.1% are Native American. The partner organizations, schools and advisors who are part of the target community will be involved in the planning, investment and implementation of the project as described in the project details in (b) above. Our secondary target community includes Nevada County's neighboring counties - Butte, Placer, Sutter and Yuba County with a population total of more than 700,000, and nearby Sacramento County's population of 1.4 million and Reno's population of 2 million. In our area, attendance at arts exhibitions, performing arts, film festivals and other events are averaging 70% from within the county and 30% from outside of the county. We expect a similar breakdown in attendance for the TTEAP. Our regional media outlets reach California, Nevada and beyond so it is anticipated that tourists will be attracted to the area, and will spend money on accommodations, restaurants and souvenirs. The TTEAP is an opportunity for the public to view and engage in site-based art that will articulate the uniqueness of this place and to experience once again – or for the first time – one of the most beautiful open spaces in Nevada County.

g. Plans for promoting and publicizing: A marketing and communications plan, described in (b), will be developed to reach potential artists, and to educate and inform our primary and secondary target communities. We will collaborate with our partners to reach our audience through multiple platforms, including print ads and radio spots, story placement in select publications, information on public broadcast and website calendars, social media campaigns and blogs, as well as the airing on public television and distribution of the video through media outlets and the internet. The outreach will include our county and adjoining counties as well as the state and national media.

h. Plans for documenting and evaluating the project: In addition to the performance measures outlined in (c) we will evaluate the impact of each activity by tracking media impressions, website and social media traffic, the number of children and adults who hike the trail and who participate in the docent-led tours and other educational activities. We will also survey the community groups and schools for the impact on their learning about art, history and the environment achieved through the educational programs. To document and inform the public about the works, we will produce a catalog of the artworks that will include the artist's concept as well as interpretative text by naturalists and environmentalists. We will create a media and distribution plan for the video that will include local, regional and national distribution through media outlets, film festivals, the internet and schools. We will evaluate key outcomes and measurements throughout the two years of this project in preparation for future phases of planning and implementation.

i. Goals and impact. We believe that an integrated vision and narrative of our town, well-told through art and educational outreach as part of the TTEAP will lead to further stewardship of our natural resources, increased prosperity, and greater creative activity in our region. We also believe that showcasing this model in Nevada City will inspire other financially disadvantaged, rural communities up

and down the Sierra to celebrate and creatively express their roots, sense of place and dreams for a sustainable and lively future.

j. Plans for making the project accessible: The Deer Creek Tribute Trail is in compliance with federal law and regulations for individuals with disabilities. There are sections of the trail that are accessible to those in wheelchairs built to recreational standards. All printed materials will use adequate size type to accommodate various levels of interpretation.

k. Mayors' Institute on City Design 25th Anniversary Initiative grant: Nevada County Arts has not received such an award.