



# Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission

*Serving Multnomah County and the Cities of Fairview, Gresham, Portland,  
Troutdale & Wood Village*

## **MHCRC COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM STATISTICS**

Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Total Community Technology Grants Awarded: 12

Total Applicants: 23

Amendments awarded which increased grant dollars: 3

Total Grant Dollars Invested into Our Communities: \$1,292,621

Median Grant Award Amount: \$75,500

Average Grant Award Amount: \$86,175

Public Benefit Areas Addressed:

- Reducing Disparities → 47%
- Improving Service Delivery → 27%
- Improving Community Involvement → 26%
- Cost Reduction → 0%

Monitoring MHCRC Equity Indicators:

First-Time Grantees\*: 6

Funded Projects Prioritizing Racial Equity: 10

Funded Projects Supporting Underserved Communities: 14

Nonprofit Organizations: 14

Educational Institutions: 1

## **COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY GRANTS PROJECT SUMMARIES:**

[Accent Network\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$38,000

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The “Community-based video project: Immigrant Women of Inspiration” seeks to advance equity and inclusion by broadening access to media technologies, developing inclusive storytelling methods, and involving diverse participants in the creation of a documentary series. Under-represented female immigrants from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union will be recruited to join one of eight cohorts to create documentaries which highlight the issues that immigrant women face as well as detail strategies for rebuilding their careers after



migration to the U.S. These narratives will be captured in a variety of native languages and produced in a culturally specific manner. Participants will engage in a workshop series where they will learn technical skills as well as the soft skills needed to turn personal stories into coherent film narratives. A minimum of eight documentaries will be produced and shared out through Open Signal. Community screenings will be held alongside a Q&A with the featured female, immigrant interviewees.

### [Caldera Arts](#)

**Grant Award:** \$32,595

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

In the “Alternative Lens: Caldera Youth Filmmaking Project,” Caldera will partner with Rosemary Anderson Middle School (RAMS) to engage 20 underserved, primarily BIPOC middle school youth, ages 11 to 14, in both in-school and out-of-school video production curriculum. Caldera seeks to provide participants with 20 hours of video technical training over 15 workshops, held during the school day at RAMS. The workshops will cover a general overview of film and filmmaking before diving into hands-on skills building in pre-production, production, and post-production processes led by a Caldera alum and video producer. In addition, four Caldera staff (youth mentors) will be trained on how to use the video equipment to support the project and ensure sustainability for future video-production related programming. The youth will produce four short videos which will highlight important local issues that youth face such as gentrification, personal and community identity, and climate justice. High school students will support the project through participation in a film editing camp, which will culminate in both a public screening and community broadcast through Open Signal. Caldera plans for youth participants to gain an understanding of the important elements of filmmaking as well as strengthen social-emotional learning, develop confidence, increase communication skills and empathy for others.

### [CETI: A Creative and Emergent Technology Institute](#)

**Grant Award:** \$74,000

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

The “Interactive Multichannel Storytelling” project aims to address the lack of local training programs needed to develop fluency and training creators in emerging media forms. CETI will purchase and build a 16 x 12-foot LED video wall for the existing CETI lab space housed within Portland State University’s College of the Arts. Training on how to use the video wall will be developed and offered in a Summer and Fall Institute which will provide professionals and students the opportunity to wield this new technology to create multichannel, narrative, and immersive video content. A minimum of 25 students will participate in the institutes, which will include demos, hands-on training, guest speakers, and mentored one-on-one sessions to experiment and create. Training participants will be recruited from communities previously marginalized or under-represented in tech and emerging media fields – including women,

BIPOC, low-income, and the disability community. They will receive at least 40 hours of technical training and additional hours of individual mentorship culminating in the creation of short videos that incorporate storytelling, touch interactivity, and nonlinear narrative threads; final videos will be shared out with Open Signal. The trainings will also be captured, edited, and shared out with the community media centers.

#### [CymaSpace\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$206,083

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

The “PAHcast Creative and Development” project seeks to both facilitate production of a new PAHcast (*an ASL concept meaning “finally, cast off, or deprived of” and “joy and relief”*) video series and provide much-needed access to equipment and training for the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing (DHH) community of creators throughout Portland. CymaSpace aims to produce 10 to 12 video series created by different members of the Deaf community, which will highlight the diverse, intersectional perspectives within the community, prioritizing those who are women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+. DHH community members will work with mentors to learn filmmaking and video editing skills, which they will then use to produce, present, and ultimately celebrate a broader spectrum of Deaf stories than are not currently available on mainstream media. Participants will have full access to a professional library of film production equipment and a newly created video editing room at CymaSpace’s media lab. In addition, CymaSpace intends to produce episodes of an original TV series names “KissFist,” which uses puppets that speak with American Sign Language (ASL), designed to engage children and families in Deaf culture as well as exposure to ASL-based storytelling. By the end, CymaSpace intends to have hosted up to 16 workshops for the DHH community and have shared out a minimum of 35 episodes of video content with the community media centers.

#### [Desert Island Studios\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$115,074

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

Desert Island Studios seeks to provide increased production equipment and a larger studio space designed to expand studio membership (from 17 up to 41) and allow for increased numbers of working creatives to participate in their media maker collective and workforce development programs. Specifically, they seek to reduce barriers to entry into the media industry for BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, Veterans, and women creatives. The grant request includes funds for high-quality media production equipment packages, renovations to a new studio facility and personalized editing workstations marketed towards their priority populations. The new location and upgraded professional equipment, along with the increased opportunities for creative content generation, will produce a large quantity of distributable content to be broadcast on Open Signal and MetroEast Community Media’s cable channels. Sharing out members’ produced content will help their stories to be more widely seen, advance their

careers through audience engagement, and further their enthusiasm for crafting content. Desert Island Studios anticipates producing over 200 films (various lengths) during the project period for cable distribution. In addition, Desert Island studios seeks to expand their professional development programs designed to increase the number of skilled media makers from under-represented communities.

#### [Municipal Eco Resiliency Project \(MERP\)\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$44,344

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

Municipal Eco-Resiliency Project (MERP) is an organization comprised of skilled urban farmers and dedicated climate justice direct actionists. MERP's "Food Sovereignty Media Series" seeks to give people the knowledge and skills needed to enable greater food autonomy, while giving them access to resources, tools, and a community with which to collaborate. MERP proposes to develop video versions of existing urban farming workshops as well as a series of profile videos featuring the work of partner organizations within the burgeoning People of Color (POC)-led urban farm movement: organizations like Mudbone Grown, Black Futures Farm, the Black Food Sovereignty Coalition, and more. In addition, MERP aims to create a music video featuring local hip hop artists who believe in the importance of food as a tool for liberation. To achieve these goals, MERP will train up to four members in video production skills and the art of storytelling, and ultimately produce two six-episode video series as previously described in addition to music video. They also wish to create a short film highlighting the life and work of Viviane Barnett, a black woman whose work surrounding urban farming in the 1960s & 70s was instrumental in catalyzing Portland's community garden and urban farm movement. All videos will be shared with Open Signal for community distribution. Through sharing this message, MERP ultimately aims to increase outreach to, and involvement in, an existing powerful and diverse movement for farming and food justice, particularly targeting populations in working-class neighborhoods such as Lents, Cully, and East Portland.

#### [Northwest Children's Theater & School](#)

**Grant Award:** \$161,056

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

The "NW Children's Theater Moves to Broadway: Streaming Infrastructure" project seeks to create flexible, easy-to-use broadcast spaces where artists and students can intuitively record and share the video content they are creating in one of three newly-created performance spaces. As a part of larger capital project in which the Northwest Children's Theater is converting a former movie theater into a multi-venue performance space, all of the performance rooms will be outfitted with built-in, multi-camera recording equipment. NWCT plans to distribute a minimum of eight original performances, ranging from student directed/written one-act plays to world premiere plays by local artists, via Open Signal's cable channels. Students (ages 12 to 18) who participate in NWCT's Catalyst program will receive

training and develop proficiency in the handling, operation, and maintenance of grant-funded video recording and mixing equipment. The larger goal of the project is to create a facility which allows the community to connect in new and exciting ways, while creating options for attendance for people who cannot join in-person due to geographical, health, or economic concerns, and is directly tied to NWCT's Equity and Anti-Racism statement, adopted in 2021.

### [Outside the Frame](#)

**Grant Award:** \$77,000

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The "Expanding Accessibility for Film Workforce Development for Homeless and Marginalized Youth" project will offer film and media training, peer support services and job placement for homeless youth. Through a recently developed partnership with the Joint Office for Homeless Youth, Outside the Frame plans to expand their geographic reach and their Film Workforce Development program. During the project period, five film intensives serving a total of 72 homeless youth will produce 16 films; themes and styles are determined by participants with mentorship from their peers and experts from the field. Concurrently during the film workforce development training series, 30 previous participants (alumni ages 16 to 30) will receive advanced film career mentorship and be provided access to the most well-equipped film production studio in the Portland area. Roughly 40% of participants in the workforce development program will be placed on professional production sets in paid positions as a direct result of the program. In addition, Outside the Frame plans to offer three advanced equipment training sessions led by industry experts. All films produced by Outside the Frame are submitted for community broadcast on both Open Signal and MetroEast Community Media; films are also screened for free during community events at various locations throughout Portland.

### [Open Signal](#)

**Grant Award:** \$199,573

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Service Delivery

Many of the systems and equipment in Open Signal's studios are approaching 10+ years of use. Through this project, Open Signal seeks to upgrade the current "hodge-podged" studio with outdated technology and transition to a space that operates as a "plug and play", ensuring ease of use for all media makers, specifically the organization's target populations of BIPOC, low-income, disabled media makers. Studio upgrades will allow Open Signal to offer these priority communities dependable streaming hardware to share their content online and reliably record it. Lighting upgrades and a new audio mixer will provide consistency between both studio spaces, making teaching and learning lighting and sound simpler and more accessible. Staff will spend less time troubleshooting issues in the studio space which has the potential to more than double the number of productions produced in the studio space.

### [Portland Community College](#)

**Grant Award:** \$31,281

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Service Delivery

“PCCTV’s Channel Infrastructure Update” Project is focused on replacing the automation server and monitoring system used to manage programmed content on the Comcast PEG Channel, PCCTV CH27. While implementing the current PCC Media Production Community Technology grant, PCC realized that the system architecture is in urgent need of replacement. The current system has limited functionality; the replacement server and systems will support enhanced accessibility overall and enable creation of video content that will be shared out via PCCTV CH27, including live-to-air content such as the PCC Commencement, cultural events on PCC campuses and PCC sporting events. Reductions in person-hours currently spent on channel scheduling and reporting functions will allow an estimated .45FTE in shift of duties to live program management and much needed content support.

### [Portland Art Museum Center for Untold Tomorrow \(PAM CUT\)](#)

**Grant Award:** \$82,450

**Public Benefit Area:** Improving Community Involvement

The “Increasing PAM CUT’s broadcast capacity at the Tomorrow Theater” seeks to host, film, and produce high-quality performances that bring local and regional musicians together with visual artists to create awe-inspiring work that reach both in-person audiences and broadcast audiences. Grant funds will be used to build out a state-of-the-art live performance space fully equipped to record and broadcast performances. During the project period, PAM CUT will work with partner Friends of Noise – a nonprofit organization that seeks to provide access for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth to the music industry by supporting youth musicians to showcase their talents. PAM CUT plans to program four youth-led concerts at the new Tomorrow Theater in SE Portland in cooperation with Friends of Noise. Each performance will be recorded and edited together with interviews with the performers, who will speak to their influences and dreams, and which will be shared out with the broader community via distribution on Open Signal’s cable channels. The broadcast concerts will uplift the voices of these young musicians, allowing their reach to extend beyond the smaller venues they have traditionally performed at.

### [Self-Enhancement, Inc \(SEI\)](#)

**Grant Award:** \$90,090

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The “Center for Self Enhancement Makerspace Studio: Expanding Community Engagement and Education Opportunities among Underserved Youth & Families” project proposes to demonstrate how BIPOC students (grades 6 through 12) can contribute to their community while learning important new skills through digital storytelling and video production. SEI plans

to create a videography and production studio within their newly crafted maker space at their headquarters in N/NE Portland. SEI staff and peer mentors will complete technical skills-building, train-the-trainer workshops with MetroEast Community Media; the staff and mentors will then teach a minimum of 48 students over 20 weeks all about video production skills and how to use digital technology. Up to ten video projects will be produced by the youth participants and distributed to the broader community through MetroEast Community Media's cable channels. Projects will focus on learning by design, building community, and fostering integrity, respect, and trust – key principals of SEI's services. SEI also plans to use the video content and studio space to reach additional students and families, showcasing the potential benefits of digital media technology, potential career pathways, as well as providing opportunities for meaningful civic engagement. Last, SEI plans to utilize the new space and grant-funded equipment to pilot and demonstrate an engaging, hands-on, culturally responsive out-of-school curriculum to improve digital technology and video content production skills.

#### [Trash for Peace\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$28,047

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The “Growing Digital Skills through Storytelling with Waste and Recycling” project seeks to both build-on and support community members’ digital creation skills and to increase public awareness and participation for waste-equity issues. Trash for Peace will launch a Media Advocates Committee pilot which includes eight community-represented staff who will each complete 18 hours of workshops to gain a foundation in mobile video production skills. Additional staff will complete a “train the trainer” workshop to further support the media advocates to produce video content. A small on-site community video lab will be created by advocates who represent the diverse community of project beneficiaries including seniors, low-income, Spanish-first and Spanish-only speakers, public transportation riders and those who have self-identified as digital beginners requesting supporting with digital divide issues. The lab will feature video equipment compatible with consumer mobile devices to extend storytelling techniques and, will create a social learning space for all community to practice skills and create future content. Following media training, the Media Advocates will attend monthly skills practice sessions, working in teams to produce short-form videos, and a collective showcase video, which will highlight various perspectives on waste/recycling in both Spanish and English. As the project has been designed and structured to be community-centered and iterative, the specific content of each video is yet to be determined. All videos will be shared out through Open Signal.

#### [Wisdom of the Elders](#)

**Grant Award:** \$77,176

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The “Discovering Our Stories – Generations” project is centered around a reimagining of the previous show produced by Wisdom of the Elders, which ran for 8 years on Open Signal prior to the pandemic. This revamped monthly television production will support Wisdom’s mission by highlighting the voices and stories of regional indigenous people, the BIPOC community and other underserved voices. The variety show format will include interviews, musical segments, and indigenous culturally focused content. A cohort of multimedia interns will be recruited from the Portland area to participate in a workforce development program. Intern cohorts will be comprised of 3 to 10 paid participants who will devote approximately 24 hours/week to the program. Over a 12-week period, they will gain skills in video production and post-production tasks utilizing the newly acquired equipment, working together to create a minimum of eight 30-minute TV show episodes for broadcast via Open Signal. Wisdom hopes to host up to four internship cohorts during the project period. The ultimate outcome of the project is to provide the general public with a better understanding of the challenges, lifeways and knowledge from an Indigenous perspective while connecting interns to their history, cultural identity, and community.

[Wonderfolk \(Global Works Community Fund\)\\*](#)

**Grant Award:** \$35,852

**Public Benefit Area:** Reducing Disparities

The “Visual Yearbook: Documentary Film Project for Low-Income & BIPOC Youth in Portland” project engages underserved BIPOC youth, ages 15 to 18, in civics-based education and impactful change-making spaces. Through the ongoing *Unity Through the Arts* program taking place over the course of eight months, approximately 17 youth will participate in five workshops with MetroEast Community Media, learning the practical skills of how to capture footage and create a narrative through video. Alumni from previous cohorts will be matched with this year’s youth, meeting a minimum of three times to guide their process and serve as a sounding board and voice of expertise. Youth participants will use the skills acquired, along with grant-funded equipment, to capture their experiences during local arts and nature-based programming as well as during the travel abroad component. Captured footage will be edited together by program participants to create three to five-minute “visual yearbooks” of their experiences, which will be debuted at an annual community event and publicly broadcast through MetroEast’s cable channels. The visual yearbooks are a tool to highlight diverse voices, connect future participants to the program, and lift up confident young leaders to grow their own sense of self and their impact on their communities.