

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

As an internal department of Portland's Centers for the Arts, the Department of Culture and Community champions programs and initiatives to ensure the Arts are for all. We listen, learn, and co-create with our partners, clients, staff, and the wider public, ensuring that our work belongs to the people. Using shared leadership and active participation in the region's arts ecosystem, we collaboratively bring relevant performances, workshops, and cultural programs into Portland's theaters, schools, neighborhoods, and beyond. We honor that art is a force that keeps communities interconnected, interdependent, and thriving.

We host artists across mediums and regions and cultivate audiences near and far, celebrating traditions that ground us and visions that carry us forward. We balance our work with internal growth, developing staff, learning from feedback, and evolving operations to stay accountable.

The department is framed within the guidance of its five strategic objectives:

Building Community Capacity for Sustainable Change
Forging Enduring Connections with Fresh Voices and New Audiences
Leveraging Public Insights to Guide Our Strategy
Cultivating Strategic Resources to Advance Our Mission
Internal Culture Development

Department of Culture and Community Strategic Plan ([link](#))

DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS

Community and Cultural Arts Program

The Community and Cultural Arts Program is the social impact presenting portfolio at Portland'5. The program rigorously curates an array of events, artistic opportunities, and public engagement activities that are designed to celebrate a full spectrum of contemporary voices and perspectives, ensuring that our stages reflect the rich tapestry of our region and beyond. It curates programming that highlights culture and critical social issues, encouraging civic dialogue and understanding within our city.

Our Goal

The program's core goal is to provide accessible vibrant cultural experiences that expand and enrich the narratives available to the public. This approach fosters a dynamic and forward-looking cultural environment at Portland'5 and throughout the region.

What We Do

Programming is guided by the Community and Cultural Arts Council, an influential advisory and curatorial group composed of external community members. The Council plays a vital role in providing insight and expertise to shape the portfolio's strategic direction and ensure the highest quality of compelling, relevant programming across all Portland'5 venues.

Programming Includes:

- Concerts
- Grant Programs
- Speaker Series
- Film Screenings
- Artist Talks
- Movement Arts Performances
- Comedy Shows
- Cultural Festivals
- Community Panels
- Collaborative public events (connecting with CBOs, arts groups, etc. to host events).
Contact us to partner!

Youth Arts Program

The Youth Arts Program connects young people across the region to the performing arts through leadership, creativity, and hands-on experience. At its core is the Youth Arts

Council, a compensated group of local youth (ages 16–25) who help shape programming, curate events, and learn about arts administration and production.

The program includes opportunities for youth to perform, produce, and learn behind the scenes through a plethora of initiatives.

Together, these efforts give young people real-world experience in the arts while helping Portland's remain a welcoming place for the next generation of artists, audiences, and community members.

What We Do

Youth Arts Consultants & Council

Portland's staff worked with 24 paid youth arts consultants to identify current youth interests and needs in the arts. Their recommendations shaped the Youth Arts Council, a compensated leadership group of local youth (ages 16–25) who help guide programming, curate events, and receive professional development through a three-year term.

Up & Coming

Up & Coming is a youth-led theater event for folks ages 16–25. It features resource tables, compensated youth vendors and performers, and a masterclass led by a teaching artist. The entire lineup, from theme to artist selection, is curated by the Youth Arts Council.

Youth Matinees

The Youth Matinee program brings school and community groups to live performances at Portland's theaters, for low cost. The program aids with transportation and show fees, and coordinates with educators and organization leaders for young people to access shows that reflect their backgrounds and stories. To join our school and community partner list, contact us to be added to our email list!

Masterclasses

Our Masterclasses provide hands-on arts learning opportunities in partnership with schools and community organizations. Each class includes materials, food, and paid teaching artists. Topics are chosen based on youth feedback and community input. Interested in hosting or teaching? Reach out to us to get involved!

Youth Professional Development

We offer field trips and behind-the-scenes tours for schools and youth programs to

introduce young people to careers in theater, production, and arts management.

Students can also apply to our *Creative Industry Skills Program (CISP)* to gain experience in behind-the-stage skills such as lighting, sound, and stage management.

Open opportunities are shared on our Instagram and mailing list.

Youth Participatory Budget Project

In March 2023, Portland's was selected by *Youth Voice, Youth Vote* as one of five project implementers in Oregon's first youth-led participatory budgeting process.

Working with youth across East Portland and Multnomah County, the program supported three proposed \$100,000 projects in public arts. The winning proposal, *Youth Artist Capital*, funded a paid two-week summer intensive pairing 10 youth mentees with 10 professional mentors to build artistic and professional skills.

Our Commitment

The Youth Arts Program exists to connect young people to Portland's cultural life, not only as audience members but as creators, producers, and decision-makers. By partnering with schools, community organizations, and local artists, Portland's continues to make the performing arts a space where all youth can learn, lead, and thrive.

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Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/portland5_culturecommunity/

TikTok: https://tiktok.com/@portland5_cc

Linktree: <https://linktr.ee/portland5culturecommunity>

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