

# TRESTLE

How To Navigate

trestleworks.org

## Denver, Colorado

Funding for Nonprofits, Founders & Filmmakers

Denver has quietly built one of the most equity-forward arts funding ecosystems in the Mountain West - anchored by Denver Arts & Venues, the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation, and community foundations that explicitly prioritize BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disability communities. For queer and community-rooted organizations in the Denver metro, this is a richer landscape than most people expect.

COLOR KEY:

Nonprofit

Startup / For-profit

Film & Media

NONPROFIT

### For Nonprofits

#### CITY ARTS FUNDING

##### Denver Arts & Venues (DAV)

*City and County of Denver*

Denver's cultural agency runs several grants: DENVER CREATES Fund (broad operating support for Denver's creative sector), Urban Arts Fund (local artists and orgs in Denver neighborhoods), Five Points Jazz Grants (year-round programming honoring jazz heritage - relevant for Black cultural orgs), P.S. You Are Here (community-led outdoor public space projects), and Arts in Society (collaborative grantmaking integrating arts into health and social services, co-funded by Colorado foundations).

Multiple programs

BIPOC-led priority

Neighborhood-focused

#### FOUNDATION FUNDING

##### Bonfils-Stanton - Inclusive Communities Grants

*DEADLINE: April 10, 2026*

LIVE DEADLINE. \$10,000 unrestricted funding to small-budget arts and culture nonprofits explicitly prioritizing BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and disability communities. Eligibility: Colorado-based 501(c)(3) or fiscally sponsored org, Denver/Adams/Arapahoe/Jefferson counties, public arts and culture central to mission. This is the most time-sensitive opportunity in this guide.

\$10,000 unrestricted

DEADLINE: April 10, 2026

BIPOC + LGBTQ+ priority

Fiscally sponsored eligible

## Bonfils-Stanton - Equity-Focused Leadership Grants

*Bonfils-Stanton Foundation*

\$10,000 unrestricted to orgs supporting leadership development for BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and adults with disabilities in the social sector. Ten organizations awarded annually. Colorado-based nonprofits or fiscally sponsored orgs with under \$2M operating budget in the Denver metro.

\$10,000 unrestricted

10 awards/year

Under \$2M budget

## Bonfils-Stanton - Equity in Arts Learning for Colorado Youth (EAL)

*Bonfils-Stanton + Colorado Creative Industries + Partners*

Collaborative fund awarding \$10,000-\$25,000 per project for professional artists bringing arts programming to historically marginalized youth in Colorado. Eligible disciplines include Film and New Media, Digital Arts, Storytelling, and Spoken Word. Next full cycle opens November 2026.

\$10K-\$25K

Film + New Media eligible

Next cycle November 2026

## The Denver Foundation - Community Grants

*Denver Foundation*

Approximately \$4 million annually through its Community Grants Program for nonprofits reducing racial and economic disparities in seven-county Metro Denver. Grants: \$20,000-\$50,000. Priority: economic opportunity, environment, housing, youth. Cycle 2: opens June 16, 2026, closes August 3, 2026.

\$20K-\$50K

Cycle 2 opens June 16

Racial equity focus

## Women's Foundation of Colorado - Women & Girls of Color Fund

*Women's Foundation of Colorado*

Invests in women-of-color-led organizations working on economic power and social change across Colorado. 2026 Front Range cycle opens May 20, 2026 - specifically for Denver-area organizations.

Women of color-led

Front Range opens May 20

## Denver's equity-forward funding landscape

Denver has quietly built one of the most equity-forward arts funding ecosystems in the Mountain West. The Bonfils-Stanton Foundation alone offers three distinct grant programs with live 2026 deadlines explicitly naming LGBTQ+ communities as priority populations. The Inclusive Communities Grant deadline of April 10, 2026 is immediate - for LGBTQ+-led nonprofits and fiscally sponsored projects in the Denver metro, this should be the first application out the door.

STARTUP

## For Underestimated Founders

STATE & BUSINESS RESOURCES

## Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT)

State of Colorado

Runs the state's primary small business and startup support infrastructure including the Colorado SBDC Network, Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit, and rural loan programs. Gateway to state-level business development resources for creative and social enterprise founders in Denver.

SBDC Network

Rural loans

Tax credits

## Denver LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce

Denver LGBTQ Business Community

Connects queer-owned businesses to corporate partners, city procurement opportunities, and peer networks. Primary relationship to build for queer founders in Denver building service businesses, media companies, or social enterprises.

Queer-owned businesses

City procurement

Peer network

FILM

## For Filmmakers

### STATE FILM INCENTIVE

## Colorado Film Incentive Tax Credit

Colorado OEDIT

Up to 20% credit on qualified Colorado production expenditures. Minimum spend: \$100,000 in Colorado. Apply through OEDIT before principal photography begins. Modest compared to Texas, Illinois, or Washington, but stackable with local incentives. Productions telling Colorado stories or featuring Colorado locations have the strongest case for state support.

Up to 20%

\$100K min spend

Stackable

### ARTS GRANTS FOR FILMMAKERS

## Bonfils-Stanton Inclusive Communities Grant (Film Access)

Bonfils-Stanton Foundation - DEADLINE: April 10, 2026

For filmmakers operating as nonprofits or with fiscal sponsorship, the \$10,000 unrestricted Inclusive Communities Grant is directly accessible. Deadline: April 10, 2026. Denver's arts foundation ecosystem is more accessible to film and media work than many comparably sized cities.

\$10,000 unrestricted

DEADLINE: April 10, 2026

Fiscally sponsored eligible

## Colorado Creative Industries (CCI)

Division of OEDIT

Colorado's arts and creative economy development agency. Co-administers the EAL grant with Bonfils-Stanton and manages state arts grants through a network of regional arts organizations. For documentary and media projects with community and cultural heritage dimensions, CCI's state arts grant programs are worth pursuing alongside the film credit.

State arts grants

Regional network

Community/heritage docs

### **The April 10 deadline is immediate**

The Bonfils-Stanton Inclusive Communities Grant closes April 10, 2026 - that's the most time-sensitive opportunity in this guide. For LGBTQ+-led nonprofits and fiscally sponsored film projects in the Denver metro area, this should be the first application out the door. The \$10,000 unrestricted funding and explicit LGBTQ+ prioritization make it unusually well-aligned for community-rooted work.