

Title	Whispers of the Sanctuary	03/20/2025
	by Rachel Lee in 2025 Cultural Arts and Arts Programming RFP	id. 50026012
	1402 Park St. Alameda, California 94501 United States (210) 860-1670 rachel@alamedacivicballet.org	

Original Submission	03/20/2025
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Score	n/a
Please be aware that I Understand all application documents and other materials submitted to the City are subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.	
Enter the name of your public art proposal	Whispers of the Sanctuary
Are you a non-profit or government agency?	Yes
Please upload proof of non-profit status. For example, a valid IRS tax exemption certificate. ACB_IRS_LOD.pdf	
If you are NOT a non-profit or government agency, are you using a fiscal sponsor for this grant?	
Please upload Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement/MOU (only for fiscally sponsored organizations)	

Please provide the name of the non-profit organization or public agency submitting this proposal:	Alameda Civic Ballet
Please provide the name of the primary point of contact:	Rachel Lee
Please provide the daytime phone number for the primary point of contact:	+12108601670
Please provide the E-mail for the primary point of contact:	rachel@alamedacivicballet.org
Please provide the name of the secondary point of contact:	Abra Rudisill
Please provide the daytime phone number for the secondary point of contact:	+15103371929
Please provide the E-mail for the secondary point of contact:	alamedaballetacademy@gmail.com
Please provide the address for the organization or public entity submitting this proposal:	1402 Park St. Alameda CA 94501 US 37.7642539 -122.2424654
Which level of grant are you requesting?	\$10,000
Where will the proposed cultural arts or arts programming be held?	Park Street Area

If you selected
"Other," please
explain:

Organization Details

Please provide your
organization's
mission statement:

Our mission is to establish a deep tradition of locally produced, high quality ballet productions that are accessible to the diverse members of our community and enrich our lives through the performing arts.

Please provide a
brief organization
history:

The Alameda Civic Ballet, along with its affiliate school, Alameda Ballet Academy, was founded in 2003 by the Artistic Director, Abra Rudisill. Both the school and company were created to impart the best elements of the classical ballet tradition to the East Bay. In her lessons and leadership, Rudisill draws upon her 20 years of experience as a Prima Ballerina and Ballet Mistress with Oakland Ballet and seeks to carry on her artistic lineage through the education of Bay Area youth.

The goal of the company is to create and present quality community accessible ballet performances, while providing young dancers the opportunity to gain valuable experience performing alongside professional dancers.

Please provide a list
or summary of
artistic programs,
activities, and recent
key accomplishments
from the last five
years:

Artistic Programs, Activities, and Key Accomplishments (2019–2024)
Alameda Civic Ballet (ACB) has continued to fulfill its mission of bringing high-quality classical and contemporary ballet to the East Bay while fostering a deep appreciation for the performing arts within the community. Over the past five years, ACB has sustained and expanded its programming with a focus on artistic excellence, youth development, and community engagement.

Artistic Programming and Activities
Full-Length Ballet Productions:
ACB presents multiple ballet productions each year, including its annual holiday favorite, The Nutcracker. These productions provide performance opportunities for local youth dancers alongside professional guest artists, drawing hundreds of attendees and serving as a seasonal cultural touchstone for the community.

Community Engagement and Public Performances:
ACB remains deeply engaged in the broader Alameda community through free and low-cost public events. The company has participated in local festivals offering performances that celebrate the city's unique cultural and historical landscape. ACB also partners with local organizations to bring dance into new and diverse venues.

Youth Education and Development:
A core component of ACB's mission is to support the training and development of young dancers. The organization offers pre-professional training to dancers, emphasizing discipline, artistry, and performance readiness. In addition, ACB provides its signature "Black Top Ballet" program designed to introduce ballet to community members across the East Bay, reaching people who have never been exposed to ballet. To support equity in arts education, ACB maintains a robust scholarship program, ensuring that performance fees are not a barrier to participation. This program is particularly vital in reaching students from

underrepresented and underserved communities.

Key Accomplishments (2019–2024)

Pandemic Response and Recovery:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ACB demonstrated agility and resilience by transitioning some classes to online instruction. Live performances resumed in 2021 with comprehensive safety protocols and strong audience support.

Facility Improvements:

In recent years, ACB has invested in studio upgrades, including new seating and risers. These enhancements have created a space for audiences to watch dancers workshop pieces and learn more about the ballet performance process. Post-pandemic, further investments were made in air filtering and sanitation to protect the health of students and staff.

Artistic Innovation and Expansion:

ACB has continued to diversify its repertory by commissioning original choreography from Bay Area artists and incorporating contemporary works into its seasonal offerings. This evolution reflects the organization's commitment to honoring classical ballet while exploring new creative directions.

Through its performances, educational offerings, and community outreach, Alameda Civic Ballet has continued to be a vibrant cultural resource for Alameda and the greater Bay Area. The organization looks forward to building on these successes and broadening its impact in the years to come.

Please provide a description of the communities your organization is rooted in, engages and/or serves:

Alameda Civic Ballet (ACB) is deeply rooted in the city of Alameda, a diverse and family-oriented community. Since its founding in 2003, ACB has served as a vital cultural institution, providing access to high-quality ballet performances and training for residents of Alameda and neighboring East Bay communities, including Oakland, San Leandro, and Berkeley. ACB engages a broad and diverse cross-section of the community. Our students and audiences reflect Alameda's demographic richness—families from a wide range of cultural, economic, and racial backgrounds. We are committed to fostering inclusivity and ensuring that financial limitations do not prevent youth from accessing dance education. Our scholarship program supports dancers from underrepresented and low-income families, many of whom would not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in classical ballet performances.

Through our outreach initiative Blacktop Ballet, we bring ballet directly into local programs—often to students experiencing dance for the first time. Our annual production of *The Nutcracker* brings together performers of all ages and backgrounds and serves as a unifying holiday tradition for the community. Additionally, our participation in public events allows us to connect with a wider audience beyond traditional theatergoers.

As Alameda continues to evolve, ACB remains committed to being a welcoming space where the community can experience the joy, discipline, and beauty of ballet. We believe that dance has the power to inspire, unite, and uplift, and we strive to make that experience accessible to all.

Which artistic discipline(s) best fits your Organization:

Dance

If you selected "Other," please explain:

Project Details

When will the project be developed/presented? Please indicate if there are public performance dates already known.

The development of Act 1 of our new ballet production, Whispers of the Sanctuary, will begin in the summer of 2025, with a focus on choreography, music selection, casting, costume planning, and set design. This early phase will also include rehearsals with select dancers and workshops with choreographers, allowing for the creative process to unfold well in advance of the production. Full company rehearsals will begin in fall 2025 and continue through winter 2026, with increasing frequency and intensity as the performance approaches. The public performances are scheduled for the spring of 2026, though exact dates have not yet been confirmed. The production will be presented at a local venue in Alameda—most likely the Alameda Civic Ballet black box theater. We anticipate multiple performances to accommodate the growing audience demand and provide opportunities for family, school, and general audiences to attend. As with all of our productions, we are committed to making this work accessible and meaningful to our community through free tickets, community engagement activities, and inclusive casting that reflects the diversity of Alameda and the surrounding Bay Area. We will promote the performance dates widely once confirmed, through digital platforms, print materials, and partnerships with local organizations.

If you have venue information secured, where will the work be presented? Please also describe any permits or approvals you may have secured for your location:

The production will be presented at the Alameda Civic Ballet's own black box theater, located within our studio facility in Alameda, California. This intimate venue allows us to create an immersive and engaging experience for audiences while maintaining full control over the technical and logistical aspects of the production. The ACB black box theater serves as an ideal setting for showcasing new works, offering audiences a close-up view of the artistry and athleticism of our dancers. Because the venue is privately operated by Alameda Civic Ballet and falls below the size threshold that would require municipal oversight, no permits or special approvals are necessary to present the work in this space. Our organization stages performances, workshops, and community events at this location, and we are well-versed in the operational requirements for hosting public events safely and professionally. Using our own space also ensures that rehearsals and performances can take place without the scheduling constraints and added costs of external venues, allowing us to focus our resources on artistic development, community outreach, and accessibility.

Is there an online/virtual component to the project:

No

Please provide a project summary and concept, inclusive of your artistic vision, goals, and decision to undertake this project at this time:

Project Summary and Concept

Whispers of the Sanctuary is a new original ballet conceived by Alameda Civic Ballet, inspired by the quiet beauty and ecological richness of the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary in Alameda, California. Through evocative movement, music, and design, the ballet explores themes of connection to nature, the delicate balance of ecosystems, and the timeless rhythms of life. The work unfolds in three acts, each capturing a different facet of the sanctuary's story.

Act 1: Dawn at the Marshes

The ballet opens with the soft light of morning rising over the marshland. Dancers portray the sanctuary's early stirrings—birds stretching their wings, reeds swaying in the breeze, and creatures beginning their day. The choreography is lyrical and organic, drawing inspiration from the natural ebb and flow of the wetlands. A soloist, representing a migratory bird, takes flight across the stage, symbolizing arrival, belonging, and the promise of the day.

Act 2: The Rhythm of the Tides

The second act delves into the sanctuary's dynamic relationship between land and water. Dancers echo the pulse of tidal movement and the interdependence of flora and fauna. A central duet portrays the bond between the sanctuary and its inhabitants, highlighting themes of preservation, vulnerability, and resilience.

Act 3: Migration and Renewal

The final act captures the beauty and urgency of migration, with choreography growing more vibrant and fast-paced. Dancers form intricate patterns reminiscent of birds in synchronized flight. As the seasons shift, the sanctuary is renewed once again—welcoming life back in a cyclical dance of hope, transformation, and return.

While the complete ballet is envisioned as a full-length, three-act work, this project phase will focus solely on the development and presentation of Act 1. This first act serves as a foundation for the larger production and will allow us to refine the movement language, test the integration of visual and musical elements, and engage audiences with the beginning of a powerful narrative rooted in our local environment.

The production will feature original choreography, projected scenic imagery inspired by the sanctuary, and a specially curated score blending orchestral music with natural soundscapes. Through Whispers of the Sanctuary, ACB seeks to inspire reflection on the beauty and fragility of the natural world—and our place within it.

Please describe the planning process, marketing and/or outreach for this project or recent projects you have completed:

The planning process for Whispers of the Sanctuary will begin with a collaborative artistic vision and progress through structured phases of choreography, design, community engagement, and promotion. Artistic planning is led by ACB's Artistic Director in collaboration with choreographers, designers, and teaching staff. For this project, the initial concept was inspired by the local environment and will be brought to life through a combination of classical ballet technique and contemporary movement. Planning will begin with site visits to the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary and research into the migratory patterns and ecosystem that inform the narrative. The music selection, scenic design, and costume concepts will be developed in parallel with choreography to ensure a cohesive and immersive experience.

Marketing and outreach efforts for this project will draw from successful strategies used in our past productions and outreach to our supportive sponsors and patrons. Promotion will include digital campaigns through social media, email newsletters, and our website, as well as printed materials such as posters and postcards distributed throughout Alameda and surrounding communities. We also maintain active partnerships with local schools, arts organizations, and city agencies to broaden our reach. Outreach for Whispers of the Sanctuary Act I will include behind-the-scenes content, educational materials, and rehearsals where community members can engage with the creative process. By fostering early interest in the greater production and providing multiple points of access, we aim to build anticipation for the performance while deepening our community's connection to local ecology through the arts.

<p>Who are the main artistic collaborators or project partners (artists, organizations, technicians, administrators)? How will they contribute to the project? Provide brief biographical Information, as appropriate.</p>	<p>The development and presentation of Whispers of the Sanctuary will be led by a dedicated team of artistic collaborators, technical experts, and administrative staff, each contributing their expertise to bring this production to life. Key contributors include:</p> <p>Artistic Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abra Rudisill, Artistic Director– As the visionary leader of Alameda Civic Ballet, Abra oversees all artistic aspects of the production, from concept development to choreography. With decades of experience in ballet, she brings a deep understanding of movement storytelling and a commitment to engaging audiences through innovative works. • Composer/Sound Designer– To enhance the immersive experience, ACB is collaborating with a composer or sound designer who will create an original score or source appropriate music incorporating orchestral music with natural soundscapes. <p>Production & Technical Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic & Projection Designer– ACB works with a visual artist specializing in digital projection to design atmospheric visuals that will transform the stage into the wetlands of Alameda, enhancing the performance’s emotional depth. • Costume Designer– ACB works with a costume designer to create attire that reflects the fluidity and grace of nature, using lightweight fabrics and organic color palettes to mirror the sanctuary’s environment. <p>Community & Organizational Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Environmental Groups – ACB will seek partnerships with conservation organizations to provide educational content about the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, reinforcing the ballet’s environmental themes. <p>This collaborative approach ensures that Whispers of the Sanctuary is not only an artistic achievement but also a meaningful engagement with the community, blending dance, music, and environmental awareness into an unforgettable experience.</p>
<p>Is there an intended audience for this project? If yes, how will you engage them?</p>	<p>Whispers of the Sanctuary is designed to engage a broad and inclusive audience, with a focus on families, youth, nature enthusiasts, and supporters of the arts throughout Alameda and the greater East Bay.</p> <p>Primary Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Families and General Audiences: Alameda Civic Ballet has a strong tradition of presenting accessible, family-friendly performances. Whispers of the Sanctuary Act I, with its lyrical storytelling and nature-inspired theme, will appeal to audiences of all ages, offering a visually rich and emotionally resonant experience. • Environmental and Nature Communities: Given the ballet’s inspiration from the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, we intend to reach local environmental groups, birdwatchers, and nature lovers who may not typically attend ballet performances. Through collaboration with conservation organizations, we will create educational content that connects the artistic work to ecological awareness. <p>Engagement Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Outreach: We will offer pre-performance talks and educational guides that explore the themes of the ballet and the ecology of the bird sanctuary. • Marketing & Promotion: Targeted social media campaigns, local press, and partnerships with community organizations will ensure broad visibility. Materials will highlight the environmental and artistic significance of the project, inviting audiences to experience the sanctuary in a new way—through dance.

You may provide up to 3 work samples totaling 5 minutes of material to review. Work samples can be provided by using online links (video or audio), or uploading JPGs (images), and PDFs (documents).

[Untitled_Untitled_copy.mov](#)

Describe how your work samples relate to the proposed project. If submitting videos, please indicate necessary user/password info and cueing instructions.	The provided video showcases Alameda Civic Ballet’s commitment to inclusivity, versatility, and artistic excellence. Our work samples highlight a diverse range of performances—from traditional Nutcracker scenes to contemporary choreography and community-based outdoor productions—demonstrating our ability to engage audiences of all ages and backgrounds. These performances bring together professional dancers and young students, offering emerging artists the invaluable opportunity to train and perform alongside seasoned professionals. This mentorship model nurtures talent and builds confidence, creating a supportive and inspiring environment. The range of pieces in the video reflects our versatility and high artistic standards, underscoring our capacity to deliver a high-quality, professional production for the proposed project. Through our work, we aim to make ballet accessible, relevant, and enriching for both performers and our community.
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Budget and Financial Details

Please upload your own project budget. Submission can include a combination of narrative and table(s) that convey how fund dollars would be dedicated to the various components of the proposed program and its administration. Response should also indicate whether/how any other funding sources would be leveraged to implement the program:

[2025_Cultural_Arts_Project_Budget_Template.xlsx](#)

If you do not have a budget template, you can download the example template below.	Budget Template
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Please also provide an organizational chart showing personnel (2 page maximum).

[ACB_Org_Chart.jpg](#)

Demographic Survey (Optional)

2025 City of Alameda Cultural Art and Arts Programming

Project Budget Template

If entering in Excel only use the fields in blue:

The fields in yellow will sum-up the amounts in the blue fields automatically.

Applicant Name: Alameda Civic Ballet c/o Rachel Lee

Applicant email: rachel@alamedaciviballet.org

Applicant phone: (210) 860-1670

Project Title: Whispers of the Sanctuary

		application)	reporting)	
Income		Projected	Actual	Directions
("Other" lines as needed, leave blank if not applicable)				
Individual Donations		\$ 1,000.00		note historic contributi
Foundations & Government		\$ 10,000.00		enter anticipated & not
Other		\$ -		
	Contributed subtotal	\$ 11,000		
Commissions		\$ -		
Other		\$ -		
	Earned subtotal	\$ -		note formula for projec
In-Kind		\$ 500		est. \$ value of contribut
	Total Project Income	\$ 11,500	\$	-

Expenses

('Other' lines as needed, leave blank if not applicable)

Facilities	\$ -	No Cost- will take place
Artistic Personnel	\$ 3,500.00	Choreographer and reh
Presentation/Production Staff	\$ 1,000.00	Tech crew
Materials & Equipment	\$ 2,000.00	Costume designs and m
Marketing/Communications	\$ 1,000.00	Posters, flyers, social m

Administrative Fees	\$ 500.00	Insurance and payment
Administrative Personnel/Indirect Costs	\$ 1,000.00	Administrative staff sup
Compser/ Music Licensing	\$ 2,500.00	Composer
Other:	\$ -	
Other:	\$ -	
Total Production Expense		
	\$ 11,500	\$ -

Budget Narrative

Alameda Civic Ballet is requesting \$10,000 in support of *Whispers of the Sanctuary – Act I*, the first phase of a new, original ballet ins

The total projected cost for Act I is **\$11,500**, with an anticipated **total project cost of \$35,000** for all three acts. The \$10,000 in request

Choreographer Fees: Compensation for the Artistic Director and choreographic collaborators developing original movement based

Composer Licensing/Composition Fees: Commissioning or licensing original music that will be used not only in Act I but througho

Costume Design & Materials: Design, labor, and materials for Act I costumes, which will also serve as the foundation for the full p

Production Costs: Use of ACB's black box theater, including lighting, staging, and rehearsal space.

Marketing & Outreach: Promotion of the performance through print and digital campaigns, and engagement with schools and comi

Additional support includes approximately **\$1,000 in individual donations** and **\$500 in in-kind contributions**, particularly in the ar

Notes

ons levels or anticipated campaigns
e % pending and % secured

ting earned income, i.e. # of tickets x cost of admission x # of events, % of house, etc.
tions of goods, services, or volunteer labor

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onsite at ACB
earsal staff for development and staging

aterials
edia campaigns, email newsletters

spired by the Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary in Alameda. This funding will be used to develop, choreograph, and present the first act of a play

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
PO BOX 2508
SILVERDALE, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date:

MAR 01 2005

ALAMEDA CIVIC BALLET
C/O RICHARD J LER
11 EMBARCADERO W STE 140
OAKLAND, CA 94607-4543

Employer Identification Number:
20-1735397
DLN:
17053026001005
Contact Person:
JOAN C KISER ID# 31217
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
DECEMBER 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
YES
Effective Date of Exemption:
OCTOBER 13, 2004
Contribution Deductibility:
YES
Advance Ruling Ending Date:
DECEMBER 31, 2008

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. During your advance ruling period, you will be treated as a public charity. Your advance ruling period begins with the effective date of your exemption and ends with advance ruling ending date shown in the heading of the letter.

Shortly before the end of your advance ruling period, we will send you Form 8734, Support Schedule for Advance Ruling Period. You will have 90 days after the end of your advance ruling period to return the completed form. We will then notify you, in writing, about your public charity status.

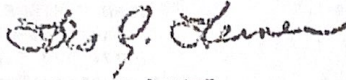
Please see enclosed information for Exempt Organizations Under Section 501(c)(3) for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Letter 1049 (02/03)

ALAMEDA CIVIC BALLET

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,



Lois G. Lerner
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Enclosures: Information for Organizations Exempt Under Section 501(c)(3)

Letter 1945-501(c)(3)

Alameda Civic Ballet's Organizational Chart

