



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**City of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, Akonadi Foundation and East Bay Community Foundation Launch *Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund***

*The new multi-year program will fund Oakland's cultural practitioners of color to radically imagine a racially just city*

OAKLAND, CA -- The City of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, East Bay Community Foundation, and Akonadi Foundation today announced the launch of *Belonging In Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund*, a new multi-year program that will fund Oakland cultural practitioners of color to radically imagine a racially just city.

In the first year, the Fund will award approximately \$300,000 for up to 12 grants of \$25,000 to support ideas for what a racially just Oakland could look like. The *Belonging in Oakland: A Just City Cultural Fund* invites projects from Black, Indigenous, people of color cultural practitioners who envision a society liberated from racial oppression and from the civic practices and policies that have upheld structural racism. The Fund aims to amplify the voices and imagination of those most impacted by structural racism and inequality.

The Fund is a unique public-private partnership that brings together the cultural equity vision of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, the racial justice mission of the Akonadi Foundation and the power building commitment of East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF). The program aims to center cultural life of communities of color as integral to Oakland's legacy of activism, and is made possible by a grant from Surdna Foundation's Radical Imagination for Racial Justice Initiative, with additional funding from Akonadi Foundation.

"Our city's rich arts and culture scene provides a voice to express pain, frustration and discontent at the injustices of the biases embedded in our society and government," said

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf. “These grants lift up often unheard voices to advance a just and equitable Oakland.”

“The extraordinary power of arts and culture shine a fresh light on injustice, build solidarity, and help us imagine—and work toward—a better future for whole communities,” said Lateefah Simon, president of Akonadi Foundation. “On the other side of justice is belonging.”

“Throughout history, the arts have played a unique role in inspiring and unifying communities,” said James Head, president and CEO of East Bay Community Foundation. “As EBCF embarks on our journey to advance an inclusive, fair and just East Bay, we continue to uplift the power of arts and culture to drive social change and build stronger communities and neighborhoods.”

Applications will open on Monday, June 15 and will be accepted until Monday, July 13, 2020. Grant awards will be announced by mid-August. Additional rounds of funding will be available in 2021 and 2022. Learn more and apply here: <https://www.ebcf.org/a-just-city-cultural-fund/>.

### **About Akonadi Foundation**

Akonadi Foundation supports powerful social change movements, primarily in Oakland, that work to eliminate structural racism and create a racially just society. Akonadi Foundation seeks to stop the criminalization of young people of color and promote responses to harm that nurture wellness and well-being. Since its founding in 2000, the Foundation has given over 1,800 grants totaling \$43 million to nonprofit organizations, primarily in the Bay Area, as well as across the country. For more information, visit: [Akonadi.org](https://www.akonadi.org)

### **About East Bay Community Foundation**

Founded in 1928, and supported by over 400 local donors, the East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF) connects donors with community-led movements to eliminate structural barriers, advance racial equity, and create an inclusive, fair, and just East Bay. Recognized as 2019’s “Boldest Community Foundation” by Inside Philanthropy, EBCF is committed to ensuring that all members of our community are treated fairly, with equitable opportunity and outcomes. EBCF has charitable assets under management of over \$800 million. For more information, visit [ebcf.org](https://www.ebcf.org)

### **About the City of Oakland Cultural Affairs Division**

The Cultural Affairs Division is housed in the City’s Economic & Workforce Development Department. The division includes the City’s cultural funding program, which provides approximately \$1 million in grants to support the arts in Oakland; and the public art program, which has more than \$1 million in funds currently dedicated for public art installations across

Oakland and staff working on special events, film production permitting and a walking tours program.