

ATTACHMENT A



February 19, 2026

Mayor Krog & Members of Council
Legislative Services Offices
455 Wallace Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J6

Re: Extraordinary Arts & Culture Funding Request

Dear Mayor & Council:

We in Nanaimo have the extraordinary opportunity of presenting an exhibit, that, nor its type, has ever been brought to Nanaimo before. Four organizations, three of which are not for profit Societies, and one possessing the physical and logistical space requirement, have partnered and collaborated to bring this cultural experience to our residents and invite visitors to attend and experience this cultural event, and the hospitality of our City.

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS COLLECTIONS OF ART BROUGHT TO LIFE

Beyond Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience takes us through a magical portal to another world to explore the paintings and life of Vincent Van Gogh, one of the greatest and most controversial masters of the last 250 years. Experience Van Gogh through his own words. Dive into his intimate letters and thoughts to explore the emotions and grief behind the paintings.

CLASSIC ART MEETS PROJECTION ART

Our Van Gogh exhibit is a chance for guests to immerse themselves into more than 300 of Van Gogh's paintings, including *The Starry Night*, *Irises* and *Sunflowers*, and the intimate *Bedroom in Arles*. The classic artwork is projected onto 3D shapes, offering different angles from which guests can experience the energy, emotion and beauty of the work like never before.



TWO SPACES, OFFERING TWO UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

The exhibit starts with a museum-like experience where guests learn about Vincent Van Gogh and his work. A limited number of people enter the gallery at a time and then move onto the projection room as another group is brought in. The exhibit has the capacity to welcome 1,000 guests per day.

The viewer is led into this immersive experience, guided by their senses rather than knowledge, allowing them to be completely immersed without being aware of the technology behind it.

BEYOND VAN GOGH IS NOT A TRADITIONAL PARTNERSHIP OR FUNDING

The exhibit is a shared investment in cultural access, community vitality, and a first-of-its-kind immersive fine art experience on Vancouver Island. The exhibit brings with it a new level of art and culture not yet experienced in Nanaimo and increases the City's reputation as a cultural centre.

This is a partnership and collaboration of four organizations engaged in or supporting arts and culture in Nanaimo; The Port Theatre and the Nanaimo Museum; with the Vancouver Island Conference Centre providing the space and logistics; and Tourism Nanaimo supporting the exhibition with a comprehensive regional marketing campaign extending across Vancouver Island and into the Lower Mainland, Vancouver, and Washington State.

The Port Theatre, Nanaimo Museum and VICC have initially invested \$225,000 collectively to purchase this event. Tourism Nanaimo has also invested in cash and in kind.

OTHER PARTNERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURE SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Various levels of partnering and support are available for organizations desiring to reflect their commitment to the growth, awareness and enhancement of the arts and culture in Nanaimo.

Levels of partnering include:

- **PRESENTING CULTURAL PARTNERS**

Presenting Cultural Partners are key supporters of Beyond Van Gogh Nanaimo, helping bring this internationally renowned exhibit to Vancouver Island. These partnerships reflect shared commitments to cultural leadership, community access, and lasting impact.



- ACCESS & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Access & Community Partners support initiatives that reduce barriers to participation, helping ensure the exhibit is accessible to families, youth, non-profits, and first-time arts audiences across the community.

- EXPERIENCE PARTNERS

Experience Partners support specific moments within the visitor journey, contributing to welcoming, inclusive, and engaging experiences throughout the exhibit.

- SUPPORTING PARTNERS

Supporting Partners demonstrate their commitment to arts and culture on Vancouver Island while helping make Beyond Van Gogh Nanaimo possible.

- COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community Partners are local organizations that proudly support Nanaimo hosting a world-class cultural experience and want to be part of a landmark moment for the community.

BENEFITS AND POSITIVE IMPACTS

Beyond Van Gogh, The Immersive Experience, will bring to our community significant social, cultural and economic benefits.

- This is the first of its type of partnership and collaboration of arts and culture centric organizations building a foundation for future events and exhibits.
- The exhibition brings with it a new level of arts and culture not yet experienced in Nanaimo and increases the City's reputation as a cultural centre.
- The surplus of this project, if any, is envisioned as future seed money needed to bring more exhibits and events in following years to build sustainability and off-set risk.
- A portion of the funding and partnering will go towards programs like education and affordable access for families and children. Both the Port Theatre and Museum do these things as part of their mandates as not-for-profits and at significant cost.
- Ticket prices for this exhibit have been kept as low as possible and reduced rates are offered for seniors, students, and families.
- The exhibit increases the exposure of Nanaimo through multimedia marketing campaigns bringing tourism visitation to Nanaimo to the forefront, drawing visitors to Nanaimo to view the exhibit as well as making it a current and future destination for those not attending the exhibit.



- Exposure is measured in the multi millions of views and hits throughout the 6-month marketing campaign.
- The exhibit will draw between 25,000 – 30,000 visitors from Vancouver, the Lower Mainland, Victoria, Vancouver Island, and Washington State.
- Nanaimo will realize a positive economic impact of between \$5 Million - \$6 Million in those 7 weeks, and additional positive economic impact from future visitation.

THE BUDGET

The Budget for this million-dollar production is presented below.

BVG NANAIMO 2026 BUDGET

REVENUES

Ticketing	\$644,096
Merchandise	\$104,706
Sponsorships & Grants	\$150,000
Partner Contributions	\$225,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$1,123,802

EXPENDITURES

License Fee	\$210,000
Commission > 15,000 Tix	\$4,341
Royalty 2.5%	\$21,645
Road Crew	\$322,420
Wages	\$157,678
Local Equipment Rental	\$5,300
Advertising & Marketing	\$150,000
Sponsorship	\$3,500
Merchandise Supplies	\$1,000
Contingency	\$30,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$905,884

PARTNERSHIP REPAYMENT	\$225,000
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OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	-\$7,082
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THE REQUEST

The four partners (Port Theatre, Nanaimo Museum, VICC & TNS) respectfully request a financial grant from the City of Nanaimo in the amount of \$100,000 (One Hundred Thousand Dollars) to assist in bringing this production to Nanaimo, and realizing the various positive social, cultural and economic impacts and benefits as its return on the investment into this cultural exhibition.

We believe in this project strongly and the partners have heavily invested accordingly. Funding is a delicate and nuanced decision and there is always a need for more. We believe we have a strong case for support, and the community impact will be extensive.

We have come to Council directly instead of applying through the City's existing grant structure because of our concern that it might displace organizations that routinely rely on that limited funding; and this project is truly a once in a decade, perhaps even in a generation.

We have the support of City staff, who are as excited about this project as we are. As mentioned, staff work within various frameworks and can only access some restricted funds. Many funding streams are too small to fund this project, reserved for very specific purposes like bringing in conferences/competitions, or intended to fund local arts groups. This is an extraordinary project and needs an extraordinary ask.

The financial grant will be utilized:

- Towards programs like education and affordable access for families and children.
- To reduce barriers to participation, helping ensure the exhibit is accessible to families, youth, non-profits, and first-time arts audiences across the community.
- For School District student and Recreational Summer Camp participation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this Request to Council and Council's consideration of it.

Respectfully,

David Warburton

David Warburton
Artistic Executive Director
Port Theatre

Sophia Mayer

Sophia Mayer
General Manager
Nanaimo Museum

Chuck Loewen

Chuck Loewen
General Manager
V.I.C.C.

Carly Pereboom

Carly Pereboom
Chief Executive Officer
Tourism Nanaimo

