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California Arts Council Awards Connectopod Learning, Inc. “Arts and Public Media” Grant

State funds support multiplatform nonprofit media projects that build public awareness and support for the arts.

Reseda, Calif. (June 12, 2018)–Today, the California Arts Council announced its plans to award \$18,000 to *Connectopod Learning* as part of its Arts and Public Media program.

Over the summer, [Connectopod Learning](#) and [The Social Justice Learning Institute](#) will host a 5-week youth Podcast Residency, “Changing the Narrative,” focused on giving South LA youth the agency to share their own experience as young people of color. The youth participants will learn research skills, storytelling recording, editing and marketing skills to produce a podcast. The first episode will be the first of a 6-part series completed over the next school year. Our [guest speakers](#) scheduled for this Podcast Residency include Dr. Safiya Noble, author, researcher & USC professor; Independent Designer, Eduardo Salazar, and Marketing and Communications Professional, Jessica Jewell Lanier.

“Our work to empower youth to tell their stories is crucial in our shifting media landscape. Our goal is to increase access to technology and storytelling for kids to own their narrative,” said Andrea Lopez, Connectopod Co-CEO and Co-founder. “We work with kids facing lots of challenges that can easily make them feel powerless. By teaching them how to podcast We teach them how to transcend barriers and to turn needing into leading.” Betsy Foldes Meiman, Connectopod Co-CEO and Co-founder adds.

The Arts and Public Media- program supports multiplatform nonprofit media projects that demonstrate a clear approach to building public awareness and support for the arts. The program is rooted in the California Arts Council’s vision to create a state where the arts are a central component of daily life and accessible to all, reflecting contributions from all of California’s diverse populations and fostering civic engagement.

Connectopod Learning is one of 16 grantees chosen for the Arts and Public Media program. The award was featured as part of a [larger announcement](#) from the California Arts Council.

“Storytelling is an essential part of framing arts and culture as a centerpiece in the lives of all Californians,” Nashormeh Lindo, California Arts Council Chair said. “We are pleased to support this project from Connectopod Learning as it helps to shine a brighter light on California’s creative landscape.”

To view a complete listing of all Arts and Public Media grantees, visit http://arts.ca.gov/programs/files/FY1718_ProjectDescriptions_APM.pdf.

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Connectopod Learning empowers youth facing social, economic, cultural and developmental challenges through podcast. Founded in 2017, the organization has made it its mission to increase access to STEAM-base learning and to cultivate media literacy in kids through the power of podcast, technology, fun and storytelling. Every child has the right to be heard. Connectopod teaches them how. *“You’ve got a voice, kid! Use it!”* For more information, visit www.connectopod.net.

The Social Justice Learning Institute is dedicated to improving the education, health, and well being of youth and communities of color by empowering them to enact social change through research, training, and community mobilization. SJLI envisions communities where education empowers individuals to use their agency for the purpose of improving each other’s lives. Learn more at: www.sjli.org

The mission of the California Arts Council, a state agency, is to advance California through the arts and creativity. The Council is committed to building public will and resources for the arts; fostering accessible arts initiatives that reflect contributions from all of California’s diverse populations; serving as a thought leader and champion for the arts; and providing effective and relevant programs and services.

Members of the California Arts Council include: Chair Nashormeh Lindo, Vice Chair Larry Baza, Phoebe Beasley, Christopher Coppola, Juan Devis, Kathleen Gallegos, Jaime Galli, Donn K. Harris, Louise McGuinness, Steven Oliver, and Rosalind Wyman. Learn more at www.arts.ca.gov.