

Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism Activation Plan - Strategy Overview ([Regional Plan Part 2](#))

Section 1 - General Overview

Topic	Sub-Topic
<p>Target Sector Strategy - Brief Overview</p>	<p>This target sector strategy aims to elevate the Southern Border Region as a vibrant hub of arts, culture, heritage, and tourism (AHT), fostering equitable economic opportunity through creative entrepreneurship, workforce development, and cultural engagement. This sector has been selected due to its potential to diversify the economy, promote regional identity, and create quality jobs across skill levels, particularly for historically underrepresented communities.</p> <p>The Arts was selected as a priority sector for immediate implementation based on its economic potential, resilience, ability to diversify the regional economy, support for small businesses, and multiplier effect.</p> <p><u>Sector Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic Potential: This sector is a key driver of job creation and economic diversification. By linking arts with tourism in the proposed strategy, San Diego can attract a diverse array of visitors, increasing demand for local cultural experiences and generating revenue across multiple sectors such as hospitality and entertainment. The San Diego region brought in \$14 billion in regional tourism spending and there has been rising employment demand across creative industries. ● Environmental Imperative: The sector can drive sustainability by fostering a connection to natural landscapes and historic sites. By adopting eco-friendly practices such as green tourism and responsible site management. The sector minimizes environmental impact. Additionally, the arts can raise awareness about climate change and inspire both locals and visitors to engage in environmental stewardship. ● Equity Considerations: The sector can address rising living costs and seek to ensure equitable access to cultural offerings. The proposed strategies promote affordable spaces and resources and can support the sector's long-term viability while fostering inclusivity in both well-known areas such as Old Town and disinvested communities seeking to develop their tourism sector.

Strategies and Tactics: The region will advance this target sector over the first 18 months of implementation through the following strategies, included in the Regional Plan Part II. These strategies have been prioritized for their critical role in establishing foundational steps for further action and their potential to achieve early “wins” to sustain momentum.

Strategy 1: Foster Creative Entrepreneurship

Near-Term Tactics:

Tactic 1: Cultivate business development training and mentorship to artists and creative entrepreneurs

Tactic 2: Establish partnerships with local banks to offer low-interest loans and micro-grants to creative businesses

Strategy 2: Strengthen Workforce Development

Near-Term Tactics:

Tactic 1: Collaborate with local colleges, universities, and trade schools

Tactic 2: Advocate for local legislation enabling quality jobs within the creative economy

Strategy 3: Elevate Community Initiatives

Near-Term Tactics:

Tactic 1: Invest in community-led cultural initiatives in key cultural districts to drive tourism

Tactic 2: Spotlight and heighten San Diego County’s diverse local art scene through regional collaborative efforts

Strategy 4: Build Cross-sector Partnerships

Near-Term Tactics:

Tactic 1: Establish a task force composed of leaders from arts, tourism, academia, industry, and government.

Tactic 2: Develop network platforms to connect creative entrepreneurs with industry, philanthropy, and government

<p>Operating Structure to Organize and Execute</p>	<p>To effectively organize and execute the ACHT Activation Plan, the California Jobs First Southern Border Coalition will establish an Arts and Tourism Advisory Committee with representatives from across San Diego County. This committee will guide the plan’s implementation and encourage collaboration among the many stakeholders that comprise the Arts and Tourism space within San Diego County.</p> <p>In addition to supporting the committee, the Industry Investment Coordinator will ensure Sector Leads and other Coalition partners have opportunities to engage with and support specific Activation Plan tasks. Task goals will be established based on feasibility and impact, establishing a clear timeline with milestones, and securing necessary resources. Performance will be measured using metrics like job creation numbers and wages, with regular evaluations and reports to stakeholders. Key focus areas include expanding workforce training programs, attracting investment in key sectors, promoting innovation and R&D, developing sustainable infrastructure, ensuring equitable access to opportunities, and protecting workers' rights.</p> <p>Continuous improvement will be achieved through regular reviews and updates of the plan, fostering a culture of innovation and knowledge sharing while maintaining strong communication among stakeholders. By implementing this structure and focusing on these key areas, the coalition can effectively achieve its objectives of driving economic growth and bringing high-quality jobs to the region.</p>
<p>Program Design</p>	<p>1. Program Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To drive inclusive and sustainable growth of the creative economy by investing in talent, creating high-quality jobs, and enhancing regional competitiveness with an emphasis on ensuring disinvested communities have access and share in the benefits. <p>2. Program Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish the Southern Border Region as a globally renowned hub for arts and culture – driving increased levels of tourism as a result. ● Develop a robust pipeline of local skilled workers focusing on increasing participation and job opportunities for workers from disinvested communities. This includes developing career pathways, improving workforce training programs, and addressing skills gaps within the arts and tourism sectors. ● Ensure equitable access to job opportunities and training programs for disinvested and marginalized communities, including Indigenous and tribal groups and disabled individuals, and protect workers rights and safety. ● Develop entrepreneurial capacity of artists and small creative businesses

- Increase access to affordable cultural spaces and resources
- Strengthen public-private partnerships across the creative economy, including tourism and academia
- Promote climate-responsive cultural infrastructure and storytelling

3. **Target Audience:**

- Creative entrepreneurs/businesses: Existing and prospective creative entrepreneurs and creative businesses in the region, including small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Workers: Individuals seeking employment in either the Arts or Tourism sectors, including those with less than a formal degree from a community college.
- Educational Institutions: K-12 schools, community colleges, and universities.
- Workforce Development Organizations: Job training providers, workforce boards and employment agencies.
- Small Business Development Centers: Organizations that provide support services to small businesses.
- Government Agencies: Local, regional, and state agencies involved in economic development, workforce development and environmental regulation.

4. **Partnerships:**

- Build strong partnerships with key stakeholders, including:
 - Disinvested communities
 - Local Governments
 - Tribal Governments
 - Small and Large Businesses
 - Community Members
 - Nonprofit Organizations
 - Philanthropy
 - Educational Institutions
 - Workforce Development Organizations
 - Industry Associations
 - Small Business Development Centers

5. **Communications and Outreach**

- Develop a comprehensive communication strategy to:
 - Raise awareness about the program and its benefits
 - Promote program activities and resources
 - Engage with target audiences through various channels, such as social media, workshops, and

community events.

6. Workforce Development & Training

- Establish a regional Talent Demand Report articulating the key skills and competencies that employers are searching for within in-demand positions.
- Identify local academic institutions that are teaching the necessary skills and competencies by designating them as Verified Providers.
- Provide internships for local students with disadvantaged backgrounds with creative businesses
- Create onramps for workers with disadvantaged backgrounds to attain access to high-quality jobs within Arts and Tourism.

7. Sustainability:

- Explore long-term funding mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of program activities beyond the initial 18-month period.
- Collaborate with regional partners to develop a sustainable plan for long-term tactics and strategies that require continuous monitoring or financial support.

8. Equity & Inclusion

- Implement targeted outreach and recruitment strategies to ensure the underrepresented communities have access to Arts and Tourism job opportunities and training programs.
- Partner with community-based organizations to provide wraparound support services, such as transportation assistance, childcare, and language support, to help individuals overcome barriers to employment.

9. Program Evaluation

- Program data will be tracked and reported with aggregate and disaggregated data that allows examination of impacts and progress relative to specific segments of disinvested communities.
- The program will be evaluated based on its effectiveness in achieving its objectives. Key performance indicators will include:
 - Number of individuals trained and placed in Arts and Tourism jobs
 - Number of new creative businesses attracted to the region
 - Increase in creative economy sector employment and wages
 - Level of investment in the Arts
 - Reduction in disparities and increased participation of underrepresented communities in the Arts and Tourism.

Goals and Metrics

Overall measures for sector outcomes expected over 1 (one) to 5 (five) years from the full strategy outline in the **Regional Plan** include:

	<p>Economic Growth & Diversification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal: Position the Southern Border Region as a global hub for arts and culture, contributing significantly to regional economic growth through increased investment, development, and tourism. <p>KPIs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in employment: Increase in jobs within the region’s creative economy compared to baseline figures documented at the county level. ○ Growth in the quantity of resources and engagements available within the local creative ecosystem: Track the growth in the programs, funding opportunities, studies, and events. ○ Development of comprehensive workforce development strategy for the region’s creative economy <p>Short-term measures and benchmarks to track progress related to Activation Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Arts and Tourism Working Group is established and meets at least quarterly. ● Completion of an Arts and Tourism Talent Demand Report ● Selection of designated Verified Programs ● Establishment of partnership with local financial institutions to offer low-interest loans and micro-grants for local creative entrepreneurs.
<p>Challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A downturn in the economy ● Lack of action - just more studies and meetings ● Inadequate funding and collaboration to support existing and new business activity ● Lack of local training and education programs to provide a sufficient number of qualified workers ● Limited funding for targeted and ongoing technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs ● Further environmental degradation makes living and working in the region unhealthy. ● Climate change impacts leading to reduced availability of funds for arts and culture ● Immigration politics <p><i>Purpose</i> - What might get in the way, and what is our response to it?</p>

Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism Activation Plan - Tactical Work Plan

Section 2 - Steps in Implementing

Tactic Overview	Task	Potential Responsible Party	Timeline (Quarters)
Strategy 1: Foster creative entrepreneurship			
<p>Tactic 1: Cultivate business development training and mentorship to artists and creative entrepreneurs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Fostering support for creative entrepreneurs to scale their operations and develop sustainable business models ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase in quantity of companies participating and receiving assistance from the tourism accelerator program. 2) Number of mentorship and networking sessions hosted for emerging artists. 3) Number of local artists supported through the Artist Incubator program. 	<p>1.1.1 Expand the reach and scope of the DEI Tourism Accelerator Program to support additional small businesses and entrepreneurs within San Diego County.</p>	San Diego Tourism Authority	Q4 2025 – Q3 2026
	<p>1.1.2 Expand programming through the Emerging Artist Residency in Visual and Performing Arts program.</p>	Arts District liberty Station	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	<p>1.1.3 Expand the San Diego Artist Incubator program to support early career artists with business and communication skills.</p>	City of San Diego	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026

<p>Tactic 2: Establish partnerships with local banks to offer low-interest loans and micro-grants for creative businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: Increase the access to capital for creative entrepreneurs to create more inclusive opportunities. • Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism • Potential metrics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of partnership with local financial institution 2. Number of partnerships established with local financial institutions 3. Quantity of loans/grants that become available for local SMEs 	<p>1.2.1 Create partnership(s) with local bank(s) to offer low-interest loan for local SMEs in the creative economy.</p>	<p>SDSU Industry Partners</p>	<p>Q1 2026 – Q3 2026</p>
	<p>1.2.2 Create partnership(s) with local bank(s) to offer micro-grants for local SMEs in the creative economy.</p>	<p>SDSU Industry Partners</p>	<p>Q1 2026 – Q3 2026</p>
	<p>1.2.3 Maintain and strengthen the Arts and Culture Fund</p>	<p>City of San Diego</p>	<p>Q4 2025 – Q3 2026</p>

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Section 2 - Steps in Implementing

Tactic Overview	Task	Potential Responsible Party	Timeline (Quarterly)
Strategy 2: Strengthen workforce development			
<p>Tactic 1: Collaborate with local colleges, universities, and trade schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: To identify current and future workforce needs in both the Arts and Tourism ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Number of employers surveyed</i> 2) <i>Identification of in-demand occupations and skills gaps</i> 3) <i>Projected future workforce needs by sector</i> 4) <i>Number of verified programs designated</i> 5) <i>Number of student places in internships</i> 6) <i>Number of interns that convert to full-time positions</i> 	2.1.1 Conduct an employer working group with Arts and Tourism companies to quantify real-time local labor demand for entry-level talent using TPM methodology.	SDSU SDREDC SDTA City of San Diego Industry Partners	Q4 2025 – Q2 2026
	2.1.2 Identify academic institutions teaching in-demand skills as Verified Programs for Arts and Tourism.	SDSU SDREDC SDTA City of San Diego Industry Partners	Q2 2026 – Q4 2026
	2.1.3 Place 50 students from Arts and Tourism Verified Programs into internships at San Diego companies.	SDSU San Diego Workforce Partnership Industry Partners	Q2 2026 – Q3 2026 // Q2 2027 – Q3 2027
	2.1.4 Identify sustainable sources of funding to continue the internship experience year after year.	SDSU	Q4 2025 – Q3 2026

<p>Tactic 2: Advocate for local legislation enabling and supporting quality jobs within the creative economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: <i>Supporting local workers and businesses from a legislative standpoint to ensure that they have livable wages, healthcare, and other resources to thrive in the region.</i> ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Number of businesses supported through alternative funding sources</i> 2) <i>Completion of an updated creative economy study</i> 	<p>2.2.1: Identify alternative funding sources for programs within the creative economy that lost Federal grants in 2025.</p>	<p>SDSU City of San Diego</p>	<p>Q2 2025 – Q3 2026</p>
	<p>2.2.2 Creation of an updated creative economy study to capture the economic impact of cultural anchor institutions and the broader creative ecosystem in the San Diego region.</p>	<p>SDSU City of San Diego</p>	<p>Q4 2025 – Q3 2026</p>

Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism Activation Plan - Tactical Work Plan

Section 2 - Steps in Implementing

Tactic Overview	Task	Potential Responsible Party	Timeline (Quarterly)
Strategy 3: Elevate community initiatives			
<p>Tactic 1: Invest in community-led cultural initiatives in key cultural districts to drive tourism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Uplift the contributions of local creative entrepreneurs to prop up San Diego arts and culture scene. ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in quantity of companies participating and receiving assistance from the tourism accelerator program. ○ Number of reports completed that outline the feasibility and strategy to position downtown San Diego as a new hub for arts and culture. ○ Establishment of an entity focused on promoting tourism in South County. ○ Creation of SD Film Office within the County Economic Development department. 	3.1.1 Expand the reach and scope of the DEI Tourism Accelerator Program to support additional SMEs	San Diego Tourism Authority	Q3 2025 – Q1 2026
	3.1.2 Creation of reports to understand and develop an arts and culture district in downtown San Diego	Downtown San Diego Partnership	Q2 2025 – Q3 2026
	3.1.3 Creation of South County Tourism Marketing District	South County EDC SDSU	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	3.1.4 Advocate for the establishment of a San Diego Film Office to market and manage film opportunities across the region.	SDSU County of San Diego	Q2 2025 – Q3 2026

<p>Tactic 2: Spotlight and heighten San Diego County’s diverse local art scene through regional collaborative efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Provide guidance and recommendations to the Collaborative and regional stakeholders based on the expertise of its members. ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Obtainment of funding to commission study for revitalization in key corridor in underserved community. ○ Demonstrated increase in attendance and spotlight for San Diego Asian Film Festival. ○ Organize and/or attend at least 10 engagements showcasing or promoting San Diego’s arts and culture ecosystem. ○ Number of quarterly meetings with regional partners, including with Mexican organizations 	3.2.1 Creation of study evaluating the revitalization of Broadway and National City Blvd. in South County San Diego	South County EDC	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	3.2.2 Promotion of fulfillment of Asian Film Festival	Pacific Arts Movement	Q2 2025 – Q3 2026
	3.2.3 Elevate San Diego profile as a global hub for arts, culture, and creativity through international engagements.	SDSU City of San Diego	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	3.2.4 Collaborate with binational partners to showcase the vibrant arts scene on both sides of the border to boost tourism.	SDSU City of San Diego City of Tijuana	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026

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Section 2 - Steps in Implementing

Tactic Overview	Task	Potential Responsible Party	Timeline (Quarterly)
Strategy 4: Build Cross-sector Partnerships			
<p>Tactic 1: Establish a task force composed of leaders in the arts and tourism community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Develop a bench of regional stakeholders that can provide valuable insight on current regional priorities and ensure that priority tasks are implemented. ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creation of a working group that of regional thought leaders across sub-regions and cultures in San Diego ○ The number of meetings held to solicit input on the draft activation plan and results. ○ The number of groups who reviewed and provided input on the proposed activation plan and results. 	4.1.1 Identify key regional stakeholders within Arts, Culture, and Tourism to form an Arts and Tourism Working Group.	SDSU	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	4.1.2 Prepare a quarterly timeline for engagement and action with the regional stakeholders.	SDSU	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	4.1.3 Obtain industry contacts to facilitate an employer working group using TPM methodology with the objective of creating a Talent Demand Report.	SDSU	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026
	4.1.4 Share information with the Arts and Tourism Working Group and be open to feedback that helps contextualize the results.	SDSU	Q3 2025 – Q3 2026

<p>Tactic 2: Develop networking platforms to connect creative entrepreneurs with industry, philanthropy, academia, and government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Purpose: Spotlight the region’s vibrant creative ecosystem and provide a platform to showcase collaborative projects, explore new partnership opportunities, and facilitate networking ● Team: Industry Investment Coordinator, regional stakeholders in Arts, Culture, and Tourism ● Potential metrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creation of quarterly creative tech workshops to foster collaboration and innovation between artists and technologists ○ Hosting of a sustainable and recurring event to bring together the creative economy in San Diego. 	<p>4.2.1 Host annual or bi-annual engagement to showcase and celebrate Arts and Culture in the region.</p>	<p>SDSU City of San Diego</p>	<p>Q3 2025 – Q3 2026</p>
	<p>4.2.2 Launch collaborative initiatives that merge the arts with technology and education.</p>	<p>SDSU</p>	<p>Q3 2025 – Q3 2026</p>

Definitions:

The **Purpose** is a description of the goal of the tactic.

The **Program Design** is a list of design factors of tactic

The **Team** is a list of who will be leading the tactic and what partners will be involved in its implementation

The **Costs** is a list of operating costs (space, staff, equipment, etc.) and program-specific costs, including potential funding sources

The **Potential Metrics** are the measures used to assess progress toward implementing the tactic