

City of La Crosse Arts Board

2. Creative Development Grants

King, Jon
1223 Farnam Street
La Crosse, WI 54601, US
6083543999
jon@thegingbeard.com

Submitted: Sep 30 2025 3:14PM

Evaluations

Overall Rating

73.63

Rating Method: Cumulative
Range: 0 - 125

88

Andrew Sherman
Oct 17 2025 4:37PM

Public Access: 25, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 18, Community Importance: 23, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 22

"I believe that Jon has demonstrated a passion for this project in their application. I appreciate the inclusion of elements which are intended to educate the public, and additionally their desire to work within the community to find a space for this mural. I would like to know more about the supplies necessary, as well as the timeline. Barring these things, I am in favor of moving forward with this grant."

68

Zachary Stensen
Oct 19 2025 10:12PM

Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 13, Community Importance: 17, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 22, Do you support moving this application forward?: No, Public Access: 16

"Jon King's portfolio is impressive, and it's clear that they have the talent and experience to take on a large-scale mural. That said, I don't think this proposal is a good fit for our \$2,500 grant. The budget feels unrealistic for a project of this scale, especially with the artist only allocating \$200 for their own labor. While I like the concept and would love to see this idea realized in La Crosse, it would need additional funding and planning to be viable."

60

Maureen Freedland
Oct 20 2025 1:32PM

Public Access: 10, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 10, Community Importance: 20, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 20, Do you support moving this application forward?: No

"I think it is too early for us to make a commitment to this project. Judging by the sample works supplied from other cities, "Bugs, Beetles & Pollinators" would be a gorgeous and joyful addition to our city's murals. But there is no wall committed, and the total funding seems uncertain. I see the value in leveraging City funds as "seed money" to other funders becoming willing to jump in, but this is difficult with our limited funds and more fully defined applications."

85

Jennifer Morris

Oct 27 2025 1:00PM

Public Access: 20, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 20, Community Importance: 20, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 25, Do you support moving this application forward?: Yes

"I'm very much in support of this project, personally. I love the idea of partnering with a local school or conservation organization and incorporating an educational element. Without a site selected, it's difficult to say how accessible this mural will be to the general public. The applicant states that they will be seeking additional funding - I am wondering how much, and will the plan go forward if they're not able to secure said funding - will they scale the project accordingly, etc."

65

Christine Kahlow

Oct 22 2025 2:27PM

Public Access: 20, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 10, Community Importance: 15, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 20, Do you support moving this application forward?: Yes

74

Mary Cate Wesling

Oct 23 2025 5:24PM

Public Access: 25, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 12, Community Importance: 12, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 25, Do you support moving this application forward?: No

"I appreciate the passion clearly displayed in this application. While I love the concept, it concerns me that a wall location has not been determined. I would appreciate it if the location was in conjunction with the subject i.e. near a nature preserve or the river."

76

Paige Shafrath

Oct 26 2025 1:13PM

Public Access: 9, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 18, Community Importance: 25, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 24, Do you support moving this application forward?: Yes

"I VOTED YES TO DEFER THIS GRANT TO RE-SUBMISSION AT A LATER DATE WITH THE HELP OF THE BOARD TO DETERMINE WALL LOCATION POSSIBILITIES + JON TO ESTABLISH ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIP

VISION, ARTISTIC GOALS, & EDUCATIONAL MERIT

5, 5, 5, 5 (including more education partners + tech), 4 (there's a lot to figure out before spring but I see this being doable by next Summer) = 24

DEMONSTRATED PROJECT PLANNING & FEASIBILITY

4, 3 (I think this project requires more funding for other partners), 3, 3 (this should be added once

business location + additional partners are figured out), 5 = 18

COMMUNITY IMPORTANCE

5 (this is so key to understanding the driftless region and it blends in the importance of art in all fascist of life in a very public way. Naturally, it will get our community talking), 5 (potential to include environmental groups in public art that educates those who may not have access to nature), 5, 5, 5= 25

PUBLIC ACCESS

1 (Arts Board to help locate a wall/location), 1 (no other partners identified), 1 (naturally, this will happen with engagement of other edu orgs/partnerships), 5 (while not everything was flushed out in this proposal, I think it was smart to bring this to the board to ask for help in maximizing the potential through location), 1 = 9"

73

Eva Black

Oct 27 2025 10:50AM

Public Access: 3, Demonstrated Project Planning & Feasibility: 20, Community Importance: 25, Vision, Artistic Goals, & Educational Merit: 25, Do you support moving this application forward?: Yes

"As others have noted, this project needs more details figured out. The applicant mentioned potential other funding? Could we connect with a local business or school?"

Specific spots to discuss:

- Planning: this spot could be improved with a little more help from us.*
 - Public Access: Without having a spot, I cannot give the full points. It's missing an event of some kind, community outreach, accessibility, etc.*
- However, these are still details that we can help them with."*

Section 1 (CDG) - Contact & Project Information

1. Name(s)/Organization

Jon King - The Ging Beard Design Co. (DBA)

2. Mailing address

1223 Farnam St. La Crosse WI 54601

3. Email address

jon@thegingbeard.com

4. Phone number

(608) 354-3999

5. Website (optional)

thegingbeard.com

6. Biography

Jon King is a queer, multidisciplinary artist active in the Midwest mural community since 2015. Jon holds degrees in graphic design and opera from the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. Their artistic practice blends visual graphic structure with emotional fluidity inspired by nature and their upbringing in rural Wisconsin. Their work is frequently influenced by Art Nouveau's ornate beauty and Bauhaus precision. Jon's work spans murals, typography, and illustration, marked by bold color, crisp contrast, and thoughtful experimentation.

Turning blank spaces into visual landmarks.

7. 1-2 Page Resume or CV**8. Project Title**

Working titles include:

"Bugs: Without You We're Screwed"

"Pollinators, pollinators—where are my pollinators?"

"Bugs, Beetles & Pollinators"

9. Brief Project Description

A large mural of the bugs and pollinators that support a healthy ecosystem for us all.

10. Project Start and End Dates

I am looking for additional funding since this project concept is quite large. Because of this I would be looking at starting the project during spring/summer of 2026, with the hope of finding additional funding to complete the project.

11. Requested Funding Amount

2500

12. List of Participants

Jon King aka The Ging Beard

13. Conflicts of Interest

None at the moment

14. Previous Funded Projects

No

15. Are you a non-profit that is registered in the City of La Crosse?

No

16. Federal Tax-Exempt Status

Section 2 (CDG) - Project Description

1. Project Location

TBD. I would be interested in partnering with local businesses that could donate their wall and possibly help finance the project.

2. Project Description

The WHY. Over the last decade I have had a growing interest in bugs and entomology. Growing up in the rolling hills of Central Wisconsin I was surrounded by the sites and sounds of these little wonders. While they gave me the typical childhood “ick,” as an adult, bugs have become a unique fascination. Their critical roll in the ecological process as pollinators, food sources, and decomposers have given me a great appreciation for them... even if they still give me the occasional ‘ick.’

My goal is to bring attention to the outsized roll bugs play in pollination and crop production, as well as being the predominant food source for many other creatures. Beyond this I am fascinated by the roll insects play in the decomposition of plant/animal matter, and returning nutrients to the soil to support future plant growth. Put simply I believe that without bugs we would be screwed, and I want others to understand that as well.

I have selfishly wanted to paint a mural that focuses on bugs/pollinators for several years now. My recent move to the Driftless Area has motivated me even more to find a wall for this idea. I worry about how fragile our world is, and I want use my art to bring awareness to the importance of our entomological ecosystems.

The broad concept of my mural is to create a decorative insect pinning wall. Insect pinning or taxidermy is a familiar visual for most people, and a unique way of presenting these creatures that I have never seen before in mural form. It is also an academic viewpoint of insects which would naturally lend itself to adding an educational aspect to the mural. My initial idea would be to add QR codes for each insect that would link to educational resources on pollinators, individual insects, local ecosystems, and the land that supports them. I would want to partner with educators to guide me on this aspect of the mural. Im sure there are other ways this could be done and I would be excited to get feedback from educators on this.

I dont want to paint the “pretty” insects exclusively. Think butterflies, bees, and moths. The “not so pretty” insects, like beetles and flies, also deserve attention. I would focus on an illustration style that adds additional color and decorative elements to these insects so they are just as fun and playful as their naturally brilliant cousins. I am envisioning 10-20 different illustrations for the wall.

3. Project Execution & Timeline

Spring/Summer 2026 depending on funding.

4. Required Materials

A wall. Paint, brushes, spray paint, scaffolding/lift rental, safety gear (respirators, gloves, hardhats, etc), and more!

5. Durability & Maintenance Plan

Most paint I use is meant for outdoor use and is formulated to withstand the elements including but not limited to extreme heat/cold, sun exposure, moisture, etc. I am willing to apply sealant or top coat to the project but most murals dont require such applications.

6. Plans for Removal

N/A

7. Target Audience

The community at large but I would love to partner with any space that attracts young people, educators, people who enjoy learning, nature enthusiasts, etc.

8. Under-Served Audience (optional)

9. Artistic Goals

Since this project concept is quite large, this grant would help me purchase the supplies and materials that are needed for a mural of this size. I doubt it would cover more than that but that is why I am applying!

Media



"CreativeDevGrant-JonKing-MuralSamples"

Media/Materials: Acrylic on Brick + Drywall
Size: Murals range from 8'x5' to as large as 60'x20'

(Document)

Attachments

Project Budget



18 KB

Provided by Applicant