

CDSS Funds at Work



The map above shows grants offered in the United States, Canada, and Europe since CDSS first established the grant program in 2008. See a larger version of this map and brief descriptions of the 2017 grant offerings at www.cdss.org/support-services/outreach/our-funds-at-work

In 2017 alone:

22 grants offered to individuals & organizations

Total dollar amount offered **\$5,750**

to help support **6** dance series, **5** ECD/contra workshops, **4** dance weekends, **4** dance events, **2** song events, and **1** publication

CDSS funding is available to help **YOU** create an event or project to support your music, dance, or song community.

Grant application deadlines are February 1, June 1, and October 1. To apply, visit cdss.org/outreach. Contact Linda Henry at 413-203-5467 x105, outreach@cdss.org, for more information.

Outreach Far and Wide

News from CDSS Grant Recipients in Calgary, Alberta and Missoula, Montana

The following excerpts are from the grant report submitted by Leslie Gotfrit:

The **Hip To Be Square Old-Time Community Dance** series has been created to revive the tradition of called dances and live music in Western Canada. Since January 14, 2017, six dances have been held in small towns in Alberta and British Columbia. Seventy to 150 participants attended each dance, along with around ten band members and many volunteers.

One dance included families during the first half, one was solely a family dance, and the rest were adult dances. Each dance has been an unqualified success. People whose paths would never cross elsewhere are holding hands and laughing on the dance floor. Most participants stay until the very last dance, and people often ask us to come back to their town soon. We even have groupies who come to every dance, no matter the distance.

Each community has a different flavor, but the result is always a feeling of community, joy, playfulness, and connection. We always get a range of ages, from teens to folks in their late seventies who are delighted to see old-time dance make a comeback. But it is the large numbers of young adults in their twenties and thirties that make us particularly hopeful.

One of our goals is to develop a community of old-time musicians to play for dances. Before each dance we offer music sessions to help them increase their repertoire and skill. We run through every tune the caller (me) has chosen for the dance program, and we cover various aspects of band etiquette. Then the organizer provides a casserole dinner.

From dance to dance the band members vary greatly, but the music is getting stronger with each dance. They travel up to 250 kilometers to play a gig, so we often spend weekends together as it is not possible to return home the same day. This has been helping to build community as well as skills.

Each dance starts at 7:00 pm with a small band playing

Testimonials from the Hip to Be Square Dance Series

"I had never been to a square dance before and had no idea what to expect. The night I went to a Hip To Be Square dance, I encountered a roomful of very excited, very smiley, very welcoming folk. The evening was about meeting great people of all ages, learning awesome new dance moves, and laughing until my sides hurt. I had blisters from my cowboy boots at the end of the night and a grin on my face that lasted several days."

~ Ellorie M (university student)

"This is as much fun as fresh powder!"

~ Chris (avid snowboarder)

anything from bluegrass to their own originals. We have three sets of 45 minutes of community or "barn" dancing from the Anglo-American tradition—reels, squares, circles, mixers, scatter sets. There are two breaks with more "tweener" bands, and we end at 10:30 pm with the Waltz Mixer, which is often people's favourite dance.

In the fall (of 2017) we will host a few more dances to achieve our goal of eight for the year. Our next goal is to be able to pay our talent more than gas and small honorariums for the "front row" musicians. We would also like to fund skill development workshops.

Thank you, CDSS, for believing in Hip To Be Square Old-Time Dance. Small towns in Western Canada thank you, too.



Here are excerpts from the grant report submitted by Chelle Karcher:

The first ever **Missoula Old Time Social** took place on April 20-22, 2017 in Missoula, Montana. This weekend provided an opportunity for musicians and dancers in Western Montana to gather, connect, share, and dance. It also introduced many newcomers to Old Time music and dance.

The weekend was a huge success, thanks in part to the CDSS grant that supported callers and musicians for the evening Family Dance and Community Square Dance. In addition, the schedule included an old time music jam, family concert, shape note singing, and workshops in square dance calling, clogging, guitar, banjo, yodeling, and fiddling (see a fiddle workshop photo on the cover).

Participating bands came from Helena, Bozeman, and Missoula, with two special guest fiddlers from Los Angeles and Toronto. Participants were generally local with some attendees from as far as 50 miles away. They ranged from elementary school-age to retirees, with a large group in their 20s and 30s at the evening dance.

Over 20 volunteers pitched in throughout the weekend, making this a true community event. Also the daytime workshops were taught on a volunteer basis. All these efforts helped make it possible for this first Missoula Old Time Social to break even.

Many attendees have expressed great enthusiasm for this event and interest in having more frequent square dances and music workshops in our area. Numerous people have asked if we will plan another Old Time Social in the future. The Old Time music and dance community in Western Montana has been somewhat fragmented over the years, and this weekend brought people of all ages and experience levels together.

We believe the momentum that has been generated by this first event will carry us forward. Thanks again to CDSS!



Participants dance during the Missoula Old Time Social (photo by Laura Lundquist)