



Modernize funding for the State Arts Commission

Invest in one of America's strongest creative economies through \$2 per capita funding for the Arts Commission

Operating Budget Request

\$9,285,000 annually

TO INCREASE TOTAL ALLOTMENT TO \$15,902,300

Not funded
in the Governor's budget

The Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) has been the state's primary instrument for targeted investment in the creative economy for over 60 years. While Washington's creative economy and population have grown considerably since ArtsWA formed in 1961, funding for the agency has been locked in the past.

As the state begins a bold post-pandemic chapter, **Washington must deepen the impact of its creative economy investment by modernizing funding for the State Arts Commission.**

Washington's superpower: arts + culture

Governing's 2021 study connecting arts + economy revealed:

States with varied arts ecosystems [...] posted bigger economic gains after the Great Recession than their less-diversified neighbors. Creativity also stimulates workforce, rural and tourism development while bolstering civic engagement, making the arts a powerful superfood for building economic strength.¹

Economic data also demonstrates the benefit for rural citizens²:

- Workers in rural counties with performing arts institutions report \$3,000 more in annual income than in other counties.
- The populations of rural counties with performing arts institutions grow four times faster than in other counties.

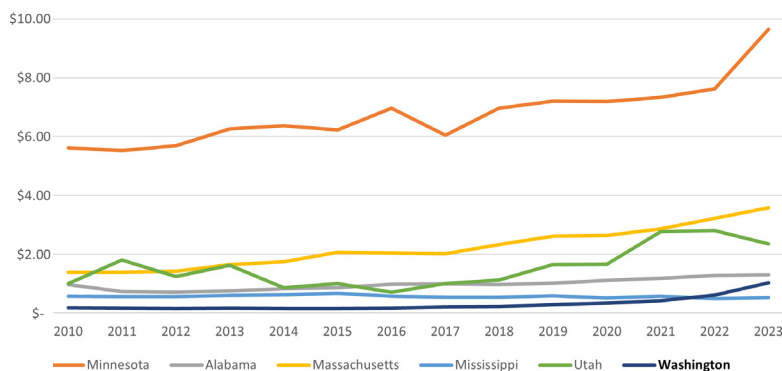
What does this fund?

ArtsWA will use these monies to:

- **Kickstart Washington's creative economy** by funding arts & cultural nonprofits across the state at impactful levels
- **Invest in new creative ventures** to nurture the next generations of Washington's creative entrepreneurs
- **Develop Washington communities** to become cultural hubs that attract both tourist dollars and professional talent
- **Protect community cultural assets** by closing long-tail pandemic-related revenue gaps, such as lost ticket sales

ArtsWA proposes \$2 per capita funding for the arts, which falls just under the national average of \$2.10 per capita. **Funding this request will right-size the State Arts Commission to the needs of Washington's diverse, expanding arts and cultural sector.**

Per capita funding for the arts, 2010-present



Above: Washington State struggles to keep its arts funding at pace with the investments of other states nationwide. See page 2 for examples of how arts funding has fallen behind Washington's population growth and ArtsWA's plan to close the gap.

¹: To Accelerate Our Economic Recovery, Look to the Arts, Governing, (2021)

²: The Arts & America's Bottom Line, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

Top: The City of Kent received funding from ArtsWA for their Thursdays at the Lake concert series.



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Operating Budget Request

\$9,285,000 annually

TO INCREASE TOTAL ALLOTMENT TO \$15.9M

Not funded

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How did we get here?

ArtsWA's allotment in 1970 was \$80,998. In the 50 years since, **state funding for the arts has struggled to keep pace with population growth.** The Office of Financial Management estimated Washington's population to be 7,951,150 as of April 1, 2023.

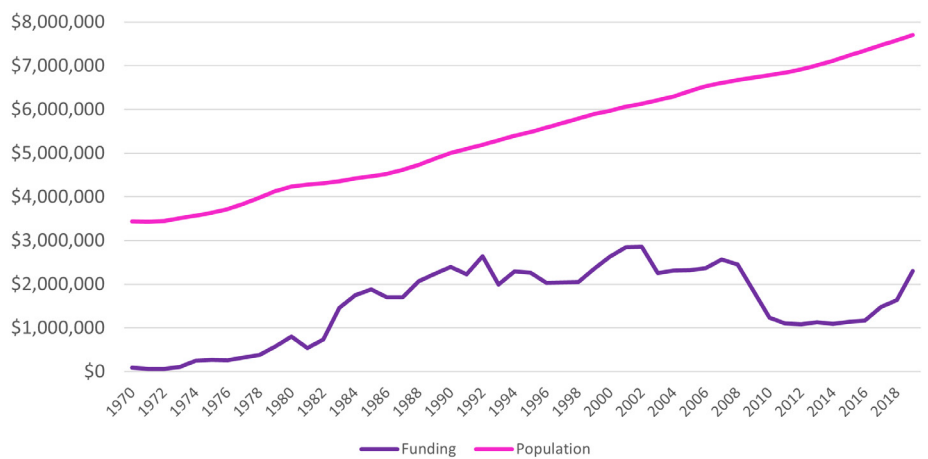
Where are we now?

The gap in funding has had profound economic consequences. **In FY24, 340 eligible organizations were declined funding and those who were approved received an average of only 65% of requested support.** ArtsWA firmly believes that Washington State should be alarmed by this gap.

Where are we going?

ArtsWA proposes funding for the arts at **\$2 per capita** to close the gap in funding. To reach this funding level, \$9,285,000 must be added to its current allotment. The bulk of new funding would be apportioned to ArtsWA's granting programs—Grants to Organizations, Arts in Education, and Creative Districts—to address the urgent needs of Washington's vibrant, vital, and growing arts and cultural sector.

Washington State arts funding v. Population growth, 1970-2020



Above: As Washington's population nears 8 million, arts funding fails to keep pace.

Below: by increasing its allotment by \$9,285,000 to a total of \$15,902,300 annually, ArtsWA can close the gap and meet the need of Washington's vital arts and cultural sector.

How increased funding will right-size the Arts Commission

