



# SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

## Housing, Arts, and Civil Rights Committee

### Agenda

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

2:00 PM

Council Chamber, City Hall  
600 4th Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

Dionne Foster, Chair  
Eddie Lin, Vice-Chair  
Joy Hollingsworth, Member  
Debora Juarez, Member  
Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Member

Chair Info: 206-684-8809; [Dionne.Foster@seattle.gov](mailto:Dionne.Foster@seattle.gov)

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Council Chamber Listen Line: 206-684-8566

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### January 28, 2026 - 2:00 PM

**Meeting Location:**

Council Chamber, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

**Committee Website:**

<https://seattle.gov/council/housing-arts-and-civil-rights>

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*This meeting also constitutes a meeting of the City Council, provided that the meeting shall be conducted as a committee meeting under the Council Rules and Procedures, and Council action shall be limited to committee business.*

Members of the public may register for remote or in-person Public Comment to address items on the agenda and matters within the purview of the committee. Speakers must be registered in order to be recognized by the Chair. Details on how to register for Public Comment are listed below:

Remote Public Comment - Register online to speak during the Public Comment period at the meeting at <https://www.seattle.gov/council/committees/public-comment>. Online registration to speak will begin one hour before the meeting start time, and registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

In-Person Public Comment - Register to speak on the public comment sign-up sheet located inside Council Chambers at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting start time. Registration will end at the conclusion of the Public Comment period during the meeting.

Please submit written comments no later than four business hours prior to the start of the meeting to ensure that they are distributed to Councilmembers prior to the meeting. Comments may be submitted at [Council@seattle.gov](mailto:Council@seattle.gov) or at Seattle City Hall, Attn: Council Public Comment, 600 4th Ave., Floor 2, Seattle, WA 98104. Business hours are considered 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Comments received after that time will be distributed after the meeting to Councilmembers and included as part of the public record.

*Please Note: Times listed are estimated*

**A. Call To Order**

**B. Approval of the Agenda**

**C. Public Comment**

**D. Items of Business**

**1. Introduction to Seattle Office of Arts and Culture**

Supporting  
Documents: [Presentation](#)

**Briefing and Discussion** (40 minutes)

**Presenters:** Kelly Davidson, Interim Director, and Allie McGehee,  
Seattle Office of Arts and Culture

**E. Adjournment**



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Inf 2825, **Version:** 1

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Introduction to Seattle Office of Arts and Culture

# Seattle Office of Arts & Culture

Housing, Arts, & Civil Rights Committee  
Jan. 28, 2026

Presented by  
Interim Director Kelly Davidson





# Agenda

- Community Oversight and Structure
- Overview of Programs
  - Public Art
  - Partnerships, Education, and Grants
  - Creative Placemaking
  - Cultural Space
  - Facilities
- Financials
- 2026 Priorities



# Community Oversight & Structure

Teaching artists at a professional development day





# Mission & Vision

We activate and sustain Seattle through arts and culture.

We envision a city driven by creativity that provides the opportunity for everyone to engage in diverse arts and cultural experiences.

*Greatness Starts Here*  
by Ulises Mariscal





# Our Commitment to Racial Equity

We commit to an anti-racist work practice that centers the creativity and leadership of people of color—those most impacted by structural racism—to move toward systems that benefit us all.

Detail from *Together We Rise*  
by Matika Wilbur



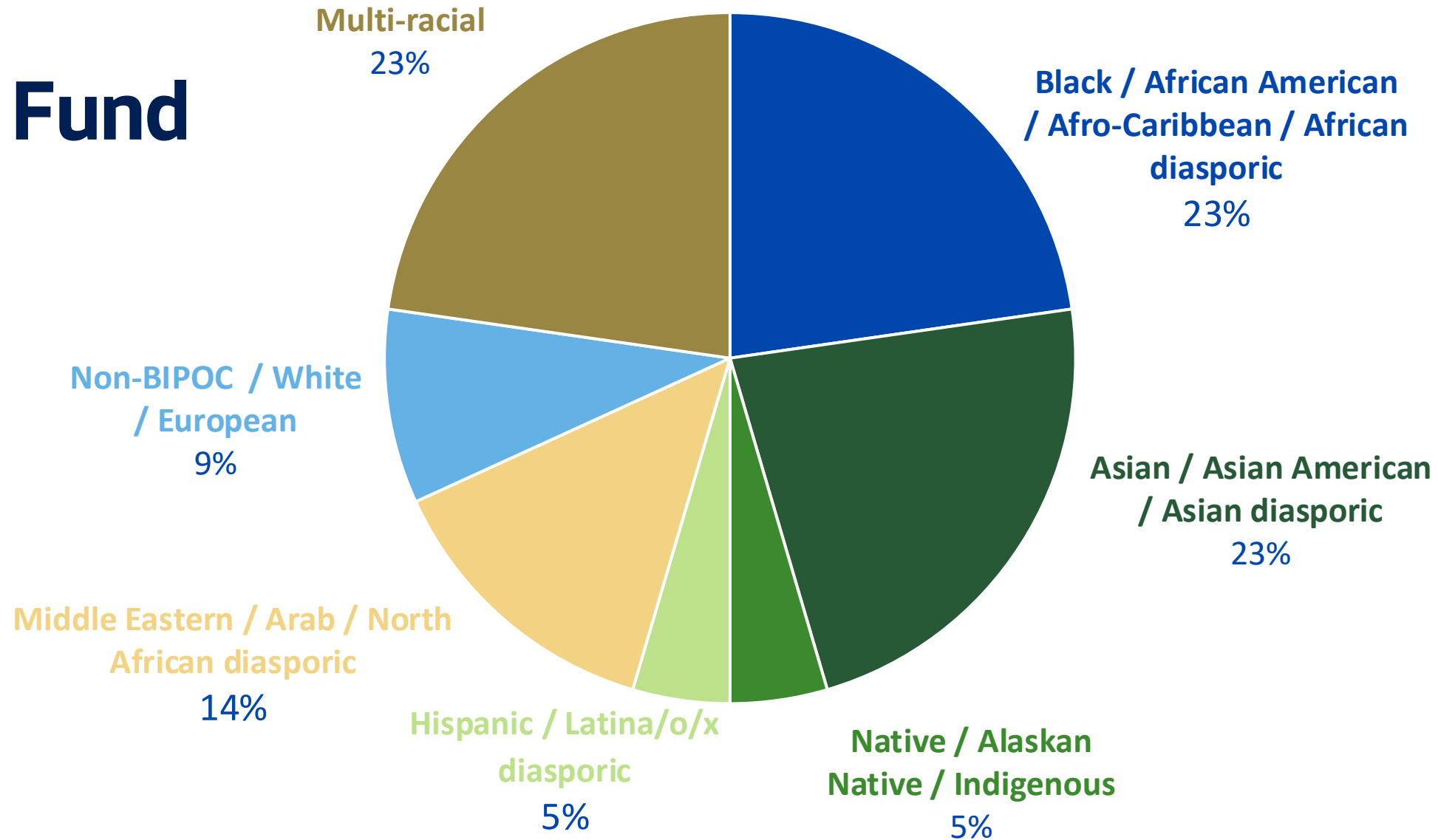
# Strategic Plan

- Stabilization and systems review
- Centering values and mission in operations
- Implementation started in 2025
  - Filled Policy position
  - Creative Placemaking



# Who We Fund

2026 Hope  
Corps and  
King Street  
Station  
activation  
grantees

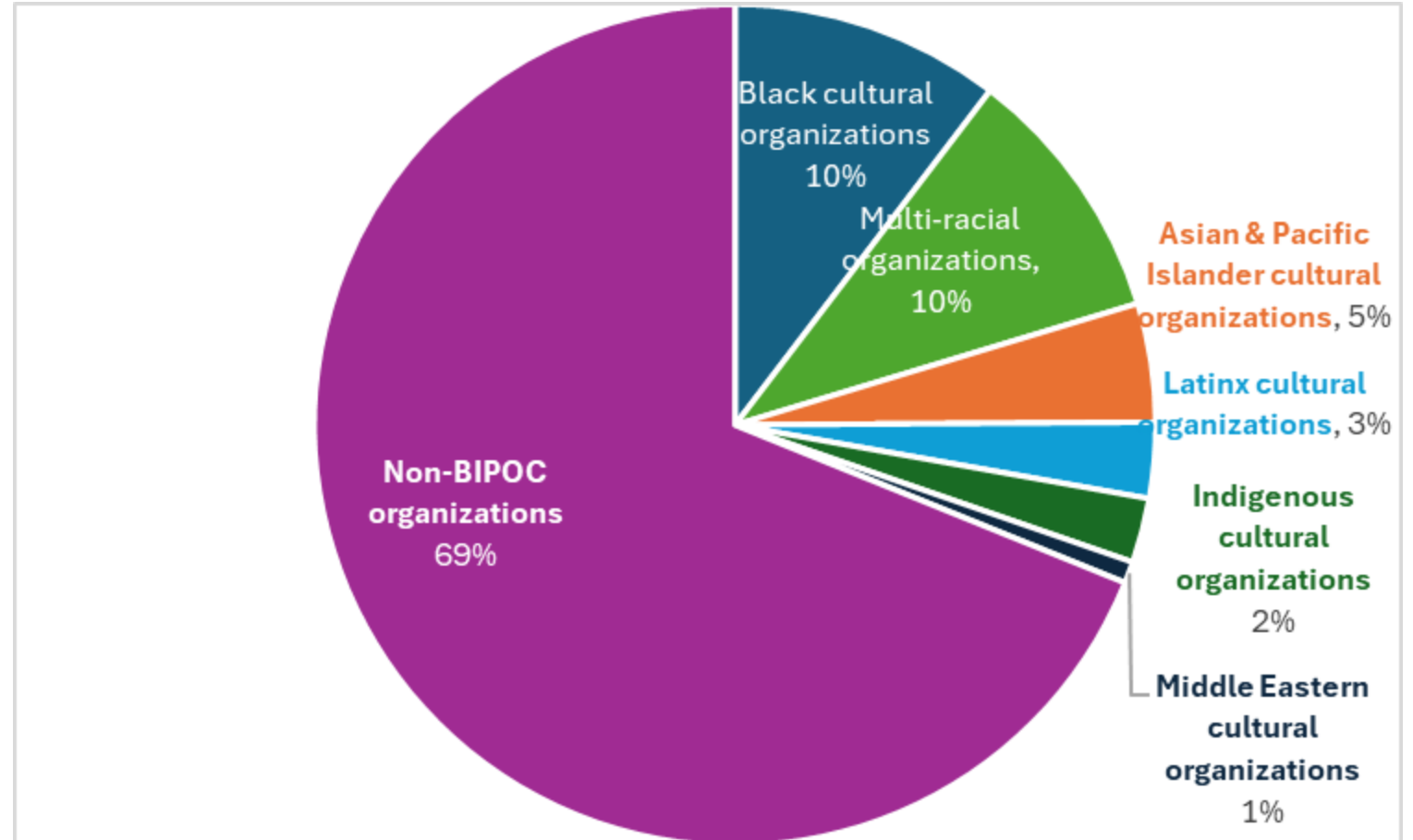




# Who We Fund

## Centering Art & Racial Equity Grant

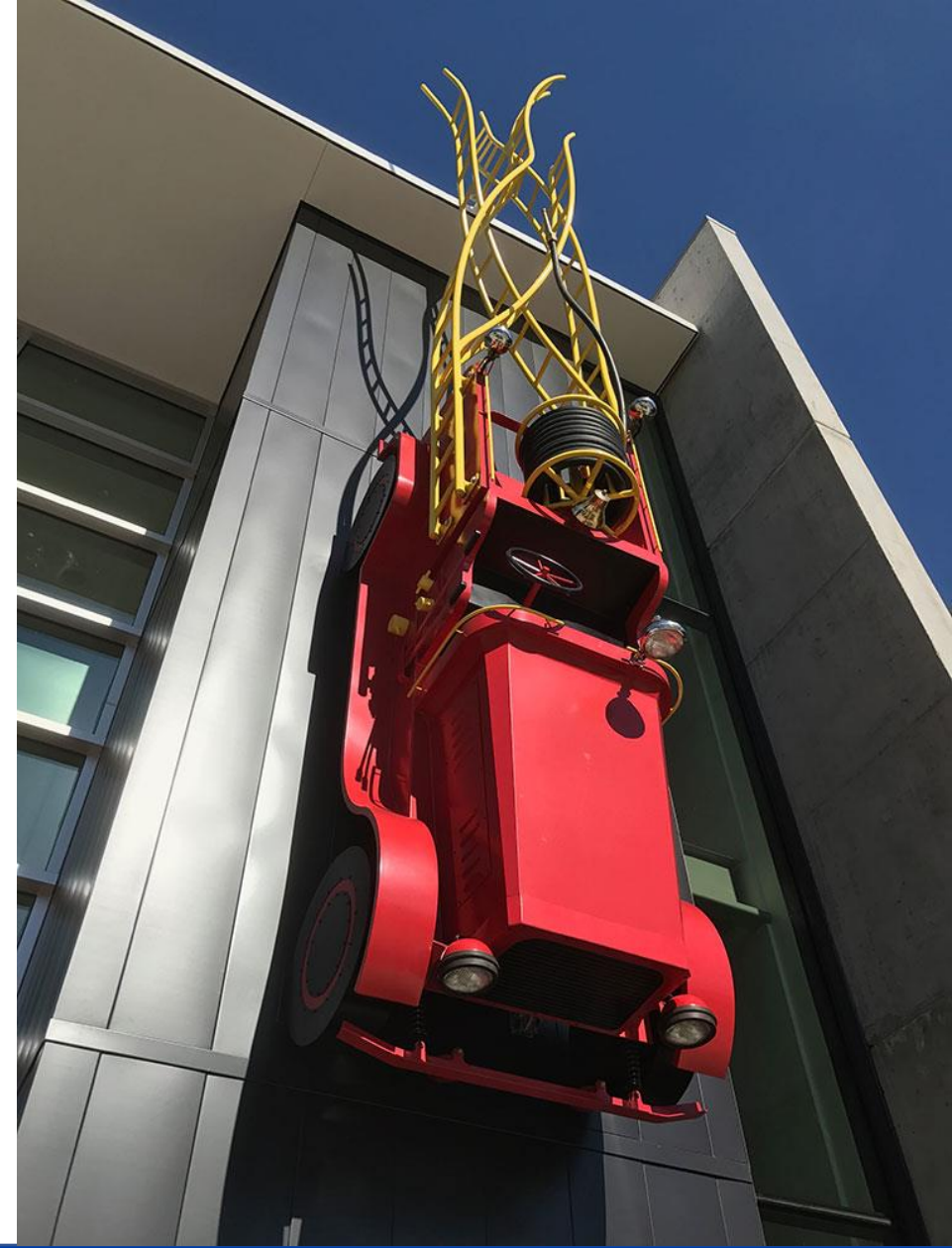
- In the 2023-2025 grant, nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> are BIPOC
- Application pool for this non-competitive grant is over 300 in 2026



# Funding Streams: 1% for Art

The 1% for art ordinance funds the work of our Public Art Division and mandates capital construction departments to include “an amount for works of art equal to at least one percent (1%) of the total cost of any such construction project.”

*Engine 32½*  
by Sean Orlando



# Funding Streams: Admission Tax

*Carmina Burana*  
Spectrum Dance Theater

The Admission Tax funds arts and cultural programming and operations.

We use these resources to build and sustain the creative sector.





# One Time General Fund

\$1,445,000 was added in Council Budget Action items in 2026.



Year	CBA Number	Title
2026	ARTS-001-B-1	Increase ARTS by \$25,000 GF for creative spaces and low-income artist support in Capitol Hill and increase SPR by \$75,000 GF for activation of Cal Anderson Park
2026	ARTS-002-A-2	Increase ARTS by \$100,000 GF for a Black choreography showcase
2026	ARTS-003-B-1	Increase ARTS by \$300,000 GF for theater upgrades
2026	ARTS-005-A-2	Increase ARTS by \$200,000 GF to fund venue improvements for cultural film venues
2026	ARTS-006-A-2	Increase ARTS by \$90,000 GF for Brewery District murals through Hope Corps Program
2026	ARTS-007-D-1	Increase ARTS by \$400,000 GF to support the fabrication and installation of the Sadako Renewal Project and impose a proviso
2026	ARTS-008-A-2	Increase ARTS by \$190,000 GF to archive and preserve the historically significant Black Scholar Journal
2026	ARTS-009-B-1	Decrease ARTS by \$1.5 million Arts and Culture Fund and increase ARTS by \$1.5 million Arts and Culture Fund to make arts-related appropriations to SPR and CEN one-time and create corresponding transactions in SPR and CEN
2026	ARTS-010-A-1	Increase ARTS by \$50,000 GF for procurement and archival of Black artifacts
2026	ARTS-011-A-1	Increase ARTS by \$100,000 GF for arts installations at storefronts in the vicinity of the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute

# Seattle Arts Commission

The Seattle Arts Commission supports our office by advocating for arts policy, creating access for equitable participation in the arts, and fostering and enriching arts engagement for all residents.





# Overview of Programs

Khu.éex'  
Artist at the Center grantee





# Public Art

Our Public Art program gives people opportunities to encounter art in their daily lives.

*"Dancer's Series: Steps"*  
by Jack Mackie





# Public Art

- Civic Art Collection
- Public Art Boot Camp
- Fresh Perspectives
- Planning Artists
- Public Artist Roster
- Waterfront

2025 Fresh Perspectives  
Cohort



# Partnerships, Education, and Grants

Our grant programs make meaningful impacts by expanding access to arts and culture for residents and visitors of all ages throughout the city, building capacity of individual artists and arts organizations.



*Here Lies Love*  
Funded by  
Civic Partners



# Grants

Our funding of cultural organizations and individual artists makes Seattle more vibrant and spurs economic growth.

**38% increase in applications in 2025.**

Guelaguetza  
Funded by Arts in Parks



# Arts Education - The Creative Advantage

We partner with Seattle Public Schools, the Seattle Foundation, and community arts organizations to reinvest in Seattle's students and our community's economic and creative future.





# Creative Placemaking

We invite artists to shape Seattle's present and future by infusing City funds into neighborhoods and encouraging people to experience local arts and culture.

This Much Brass, WALK DON'T RUN  
Funded by Hope Corps





# Cultural Space

- Two programs:
  - Cultural Facilities Funding
  - Cultural Districts
- Rebuild via Cultural Planning process
- Georgetown Cultural District approval will come to Council Committee in 2026.



# Facilities

Langston Hughes  
Performing Arts  
Institute (LHPAI)

**Over 16K visitors  
in 2025.**





# LHPAI Programming

We partner with the nonprofits LANGSTON and the Historic Central Area Arts and Cultural District to steward African American arts and culture at LHPAI.

A new long-term contract with Langston is being established now and will come to Council Committee for approval.



© Naomi Ishisaka

*The Every 28 Hours Plays*



# Facilities

ARTS at King Street Station is a cultural space in the heart of the city, dedicated to increasing opportunities for communities of color to generate and present their work.

**14,661 visitors in 2025 (18% increase).**





# Programming at ARTS at King Street Station





# Facilities

Denny  
Substation  
(partnership with  
City Light)





# Summary of Challenges

- Increased need in community
- Staffing capacity and new programing
- Desire to strengthen Departmental partnerships
- Unpredictable Admissions Tax
- Sustainability of programing



*Hamstrung*  
by Humaira Abid

# 2026 Adopted Budget

Budget Summary Level	2026 Adopted Budget
Arts & Cultural Programs	\$12,214,047
Public Art	\$5,559,086
Creative Placemaking	\$1,774,379
Leadership & Administration	\$5,470,895
<b>Total 2026 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>\$25,018,408</b>
Total FTE Count: 44.75	

# 2026 Priorities

- Citywide activations and programming for World Cup
  - King Street Station
  - Union Station
  - Benaroya Hall
  - Pioneer Square, CID, Stadium District
  - Neighborhood activations in every Council district
- PIVOT: major program implementation
- Planning and policy development
  - Citywide cultural plan