

Seattle Office of Arts & Culture

2025 & 2026 Proposed Budget Overview

Presentation by:
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Seattle City Council Select Budget Committee



City of Seattle

Department Overview

Mission: We activate and sustain Seattle through arts and culture.

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



Chiwoniso at The Meany Center
Funded by Civic Partners
(C.A.R.E.)

Role of Arts in Implementing Mayoral Goals

1. The arts are key to a thriving, vibrant Seattle.
2. The arts are a catalyst for economic revitalization and public safety.
3. There is no downtown recovery without arts recovery.

Hope Corps Mural by Sarah Robbins,
Photo by Austin Robbins



Revenue Streams

ARTS operates using two primary revenue streams:

- 1. Admission Tax:** 5% ticket tax charged at certain venues and events; funds support the creative sector through grants, activations, and arts education.
- 2. 1% for Art:** Ordinance 20.32.010 stipulates 1% of capital construction costs be set aside for art; funds support commissioning public art in City spaces and the civic collection.



Orchestra students rehearse at Jane Addams Middle School in Meadowbrook

ARTS Budget Summary

TOTAL BUDGET (\$000s)	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	\$16,409	\$17,865	\$15,777
Municipal Art Fund	\$5,799	\$5,703	\$5,804
General Fund	\$20		
Payroll Expense Tax Fund	\$675		
Total	\$22,904	\$23,568	\$21,581
FTE	41.34	42.75	42.75

Significant Additions

As part of a package of proposals developed in partnership with the Mayor's Downtown Activation Plan Sub-Cabinet:

1. \$2.529M in one-time funds for:

- FIFA World Cup community celebration sites -- \$495k
- Visual Arts Installations at Benaroya Hall -- \$195k
- Alleyway Activations and Art Installations -- \$160k



SLURP! mural in Maynard Alley by Akira Ohiso

CHANGE FROM 2024 ADOPTED (\$000s)	2025 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	\$2,529

Significant Additions

One-Time Downtown Activation Plan Funding (continued)

- Union/King Street Station Plaza Art Installations and Performance Events -- \$795k
- Community Engagement and Cultural Inclusion -- \$530k

Total in 2025: \$2.529M

CHANGE FROM 2024 ADOPTED (\$000s)	2025 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	\$2,529



Red Eagle Soaring at Station Space
Block Party in King Street Station plaza

Significant Additions

2. One-Time Funding for Hope Corps Extension in 2025

- Hope Corps supports economic recovery for Seattle's creative workforce by connecting under- and unemployed artists, creative workers, and culture keepers with career opportunities that contribute to the well-being of Seattle.
- This program will allow community-based groups, artists, and organizations to generate activations, events, and temporary art installations in 2026 in Seattle.
- Funded projects: Events or activations celebrating Seattle's cultural diversity in 2026
- Locations: C-ID, Little Saigon, Belltown, Westlake and Pioneer Square.

CHANGE FROM 2024 ADOPTED (\$000s)	2025 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	\$355

Significant Additions

3. Funding for Organizational Business Transformation

- \$2M in 2025 and 2026 to ARTS to support financially struggling Seattle-based arts & culture orgs to help them transform post-pandemic.
- Organizations are facing higher costs and struggling to remain afloat, reducing activations, employment, and creative opportunities in Seattle.
- ARTS will be seeking funding partners to take intervention to scale.

CHANGE FROM 2024 ADOPTED (\$000s)	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	\$2,000	\$2,000



Seattle Civic Poet project at Wa Na Wari

Funding Retained

Funding for C.A.R.E. retained in 2025 and 2026

- ARTS has retained full funding for its C.A.R.E. (Civic Partners) grant program which provides general operating support to arts and culture organizations and small businesses in Seattle.
- This is ARTS' flagship program and will continue to operate in the biennium.
- Organizations are facing higher costs and struggling to remain afloat, reducing activations, employment, creative opportunities in Seattle.

Reductions

Removing Vacant Positions & Returning Underutilized Resources

- Remove \$30k annually in communications for events
- Remove \$30k annually for professional development
- Remove 0.5 FTE Arts Program Specialist, creative economy position (\$81k/yr)

Savings are redirected to support ARTS operations needs in grant management systems



Where's the Party? by Matthew Mazzotta in Highland Park

CHANGE FROM 2024 ADOPTED (\$000s)	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Arts & Culture Fund	(\$141)	(\$141)

Questions?



Seafair Indian Days
Pow Wow at
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