City of Seattle Boards & Commissions Notice of Appointment

Appointee Name: Yoon Kang-O'Higgins		
Board/Commission Name: *Seattle Arts Commission*		**Position Title:** *Member*
☐ **Appointment** ***OR*** ☒ **Reappointment**	**City Council Confirmation required?** ☒ Yes ☐ No	
Appointing Authority: ☐ City Council ☒ Mayor ☐ Other:	**Term of Position: *** 1/1/2026 **to** 12/31/2027 ☐ *Serving remaining term of a vacant position*	
Residential Neighborhood: N/A	Zip Code: 98028	**Contact Phone No.*:*** [redacted]

Background:

Yoon Kang-O'Higgins is Director of Community Impact and Programs at the Friends of Waterfront Seattle. Since moving to Seattle in 2004 from New York City, she has been actively involved in the arts both professionally and personally. As Program Director with Visual Thinking Strategies, she worked closely with local museums including SAM and the Frye to provide professional development opportunities to hundreds of teachers, educators, and arts professionals. In her current role, her team has co-created over 400 programs since 2021 in close partnership with local creatives and artists. Last year, in preparation for the 2025 grand opening of Waterfront Park, her team with consultants Third Way Creative, facilitated a series of engagement sessions to create a community-centric cultural masterplan. This engagement with 148 program and community partners left her deeply inspired and affirmed her commitment to see through the shared vision of public space through cultural programming.

As a parent, Yoon's family has benefited from the rich youth offerings including Wing Luke's Youth CAN and Teensway, SAM Teen Arts Group, and Coyote Central classes. Her husband is a practicing artist and educator (Gage Academy of Art and Digipen Institute) so she understands the critical importance of a heathy creative economy.

Yoon is particularly drawn to the opportunity to advocate for equitable access to the arts and to support initiatives that celebrate the diverse voices and cultural traditions that make Seattle such a vibrant and dynamic city.

Authorizing Signature (original signature): Katie B Wilson **Date Signed (appointed):** 02/10/2026	**Appointing Signatory:** *Katie B. Wilson* *Mayor of Seattle*

**Term begin and end date is fixed and tied to the position and not the appointment date.*

YOON KANG-O'HIGGINS

[redacted]

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Skills:

- Program Management
- Community Engagement
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- Public Programs Development
- Communications

Expertise:

- Facilitation, Coaching
- Adult Learning
- Critical Thinking, Visual Literacy
- Professional Development

Boards, Residency:

- DSA Arts & Culture Sector Steering Committee 2024
- EDGES Creative Community, CA, 2014-19
- Visual Thinking Strategies in Science Advisory Board, 2014-18
- Dublin City Council Residency, Ireland, 2017, 2020

WORK EXPERIENCE

Friends of Waterfront Seattle

- Director of Community Impact and Programs, November 2023-present
- Director of Public Programs, 2021-October 2023
  - Oversee team to curate, co-develop, and produce community centric programming at Waterfront Park Seattle. In 2022, there were over 177 events with over 80K participants with 77% BIPOC program partners. Cultivate and manage a broad network of stakeholders include city partners, cultural leaders, and community members.
- Senior Programs Manager, 2020-2021

YK Collective LLC

- Principal, Jan 2020-present
  - Design and produce professional development trainings and learning resources; advise on DEI initiatives. Clients include: Meta (Dublin, Ireland), Hawaii State Art Museum, Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, Library); VTS Nederland (Amsterdam).

New York Times Learning Network

- Contributor, 2012-2020
  - Co-curated photography selection and moderated "What's Going on in This Picture," a weekly online discussion to foster critical thinking, reflection, group process.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)

- Program Director & Senior Trainer, 2017-2019
  - Managed national team of expert trainers to: design and lead multi-year professional development programs for museums, schools, and cultural organizations; created and published curriculum resources
  - Led full cycle of multi-year programs with organizations including: Seattle Aquarium; Turnaround Arts – Kennedy Center for the Arts; Dublin City Council Arts Office, Ireland; National Gallery of Helsinki, Finland; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Hawaii State Art Museum.
  - Co-developed and implemented diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy for the organization and programs.
- Senior Trainer, Special Projects, 2015-2017
  - Led multi-year consulting contracts, partnerships and special projects focused on community focused learning in universities, museums, and schools including: University College Cork College of Medicine and Health, Ireland; Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University Of Oregon, Eugene; and Frye Art Museum, Seattle.
- Interim Executive Director, 2014
  - Supervised four NYC-based national Directors and Program Manager during transition of independent 501(c)(3)'s move to national umbrella non-profit organization.

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Discovery Center, Community and Civic Engagement, Seattle, WA

- Educator, 2012-2019
  - Supported the development and implementation of public programs, interpretive approaches, social media, and exhibits including "Women Hold Up Half the Sky," "Design with the 90%," and "We the Future."

Previous employers include: Rubin Museum of Art (NYC); Parsons School of Design (NYC); The Fan Museum (London); Art Matters Foundation (NYC); and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (NYC).

SELECTED PROJECTS: PROJECT MANAGER/LEAD TRAINER

- "Looking to Understand Inclusion," European Union Erasmus+, 2019-2023. Co-developed and led training for 20 education and culture professionals to study social inclusion in their context and being to apply learnings in their institutions. Partners include Dublin City Council, The Finnish Museum of Photography; Du (Ireland); Museum (Denmark); VTS Nederland; Crea360 (Spain).
- Kennedy Center for the Arts – Turnaround Arts VTS program, 2017-2019. Led national team to create and implement professional development programs for school/district teams focused on community-building in the classroom and school building, in seven states. Collaborated with local artists, arts integration coaches, local museums, district specialist, and school faculty to design learner-centered experiences.
- VTS in Science, 2015-2018. Co-designed and facilitated process with science educators to create programs that foster place-based community engagement and conservation. Co-produced online toolkit for science educators. Partners: The Wild Center (Tupper Lake, NY); Seattle Aquarium (WA); Rochester Museum and Science Center (NY); Ecotarium (Worcester, MA).
- "Permission to Wonder," European Union Erasmus+, 2015-2018. Developed and led learning pathway for 24 education and culture professionals to help create programs to connect communities and local art collections/spaces. Partners: The Finnish Museum of Photography; The LAB Gallery (Ireland); The Slovenian Association of Fine Arts Societies; Museum (Denmark); VTS Nederland; Crea360 (Spain).

SELECTED WORKSHOPS, PRESENTATIONS

- Presenter, "Reflections on Cross Cultural Community of Practice," Erasmus+ online Symposium, Dublin, Ireland, April 2020.
- Keynote, "Racial Equity in Arts Education: Reflecting & Processing Our Collective Work," Washington Art Education Association (WAEA), November 2019.
- Lead Trainer, "Image Selection: Art and Beyond" workshop focused on increasing diversity and representation, California African American Museum & Museum of Natural History (Los Angeles, CA), July 2019.
- Lead Trainer, Coaching Workshop, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam Museum, the Netherlands, April 2019.
- Lead Trainer, Image Selection Workshop, FOAM, Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam Museum, the Netherlands, April 2019.
- Panel Moderator, "Decentering Whiteness," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, July 2019.

EDUCATION

- M.Ed., Adult Learning and Global Change, University of British Columbia, Vancouver
- B.A., Art History, Barnard College, Columbia University, New York, NY
- University College London, Junior Year Abroad Program, Art History and Fine Art
- Urban Park Leadership Program, Central Park Conservancy and City University of New York. Fall 2022-Spring 2023
- Dare to Lead Course: Seattle Women of Color (Led by Certified Facilitator Aiko Bethea), March-June, 2020

Seattle Arts Commission Roster

Seattle Arts Commission Roster

16 Members: Pursuant to ordinance 121006, all members subject to City Council confirmation, 2-year terms (Get-Engaged member serves a 1-year term):

- 7 City Council-appointed
- 7 Mayor-appointed
- 1 Commission-appointed
- 1 Get-Engaged

(Roster as of 1/30/2026)

*D	**G	RD	Position No.	Position Title	Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Term #	Appointed By
2	M	2	1.	At-Large	Ed King	01/01/25	12/31/26	1st	City Council
6	F	7	2.	At-Large	Megan Kiskaddon	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	City Council
3	F	1	3.	At-Large	Vanessa Villalobos	01/01/25	12/31/26	3rd	City Council
3	F	1	4.	At-Large	Linda Chavez Lowry	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	City Council
6	M	5	5.	At-Large	Ricky Graboski	01/01/26	12/31/27	3rd	City Council
3	F	6	6.	At-Large	Diana Garcia (Dhyana)	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	City Council
6	F	5	7.	At-Large	Kate Nagle-Caraluzzo	01/01/25	12/31/26	1st	City Council
4	F	N/A	8.	At-Large	Yolanda L. Spencer	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	Commission
			9.	At-Large	vacant				Mayor
2 & 9	F	1	10.	At-Large	Avery Barnes	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	Mayor
			11.	At-Large	vacant				Mayor
			12.	At-Large	vacant				Mayor
			13.	At-Large	vacant				Mayor
1	F	N/A	14.	At-Large	Yoon Kang-O'Higgins	01/01/26	12/31/27	2nd	Mayor
1, 4, & 6	F&O	7	15.	At-Large	Jo Mikesell	01/01/25	12/31/26	1st	Mayor
6	M		16.	Get-Engaged	Jack Nash	09/01/25	08/31/26	One	Mayor

SELF-IDENTIFIED DIVERSITY CHART

	Men	Women	Transgender	Other/ Unknown	(1) Asian	(2) Black/ African America n	(3) Hispanic/ Latino	(4) American Indian/ Alaska Native	(5) Other (Specification Optional)	(6) Caucasian / Non-Hispanic	(7) Pacific Islander	(8) Middle Eastern	(9) Multiracial
Mayor	1	3		1	2	1		1		2			1
Council	2	5				1	3			3			
Other		1						1					
Total	*3*	*9*		*1*	*2*	*2*	*3*	*2*		*5*			1

Key:

***D** List the corresponding *Diversity Chart* number (1 through 9)

****G** List *gender*, **M** = Male, **F**= Female, **T**= Transgender, **U**= Unknown, **O**= Other

RD Residential Council District number 1 through 7 or N/A

Diversity information is self-identified and is voluntary.