



WASHINGTON STATE
ARTS COMMISSION

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027





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Front cover: Dancers prepare for a video shoot as part of Tieton Arts & Humanities' 2020 Día de los Muertos exhibition. Photo courtesy of Paul Christian Gordon.

Back cover: Revelers march in Langley, Washington's first Pride Parade in 2014. Langley became a Certified Creative District in 2020. Photo courtesy of David Welton.

Left: Spokane Youth Ballet Company performs The Prince and the King, 2021. Spokane Youth Ballet is a Grants to Organizations funding recipient. Photo courtesy of Melissa Allen Photography.



A Message from ArtsWA Leadership

Art, culture, and heritage are the beating heart of Washington. Our duty is to keep this heartbeat strong for generations to come.

At ArtsWA, our mission is to be a catalyst for the arts, advancing the role of the arts in the lives of individuals and communities throughout the state. This is the work we do every day.

The next five years are critical for the recovery of arts, culture, and heritage in Washington State. As the tide of the COVID-19 pandemic recedes, we see doors to culture across the state opening at long last. It comes not a moment too soon. But it will not be simple.

Building a roadmap for our agency's future comes with many challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic is still taking a tremendous toll on the livelihoods of creative workers statewide. Global events continue to bring uncertainty to our lives and work. But, as you will see in our plan, we are unwavering in our service and steadfast in our vision.

We built our strategic plan with careful attention to the needs of our sector. As we developed our goals and strategies, we invited our constituents to let us know what mattered most to their communities. These voices came from every corner of the state. Each voice was critical to shaping the plan you now see.

We formed goals and strategies to both expand our reach and deepen our impact. The goals are gathered under four *aspirations*: Equity, Impact, Practice, and Programs. Within each aspiration are goals, and within each goal are strategies. Together, these aspirations, goals, and strategies represent our determination to face our challenges and serve Washington State.

We have set out a bold vision for the years ahead. As you will see, there is much we want to accomplish. Our constituents are counting on us. With this comprehensive Strategic Plan now in hand, we are more prepared than ever to deliver for Washington—to support, enrich, and celebrate the state we all call home.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Hanan'.

Karen Hanan
Executive Director, ArtsWA



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Raffa'.

Justin Raffa
Board Chair, ArtsWA

Left: Students from Blue Heron School worked with teaching artist Margie McDonald in the "Tales, Texts, and Theatre Workshop." Photo courtesy of David Conklin.

Executive Summary

ArtsWA is the Washington State Arts Commission. Its mission is to be a catalyst for the arts. ArtsWA envisions a vibrant Washington State where the arts are thriving and celebrated. Together, the agency's mission and vision form the guiding principles for its work—to weave arts, culture, and creativity into communities throughout the state.

This five-year plan reflects the needs and ambitions of ArtsWA and its constituents. It builds on the spirit of the last strategic plan while recognizing changes in both the agency and Washington State. In short, it is ArtsWA's roadmap, guiding the course of action the agency will take for the next half decade.

This plan reflects ArtsWA's growth and the need for updated internal systems to support its progress. It addresses COVID-19's effect on the arts and the need to support cultural institutions as they rebuild. It affirms the creative sector's importance to the state economy and outlines steps to keep it strong. Finally, it speaks to the diversity of ArtsWA's constituents and the importance of equitable agency programs.

ArtsWA went through a thorough and inclusive process to develop this plan. The agency worked with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) and Confluence Consulting Northwest. Through this collaboration, a comprehensive view emerged of the agency's present work and its vision for the future.

Staff and commissioners drew on their professional values to align the plan with their work and vision. They used words like *high-caliber*, *nimble*, *innovate*, and *leadership* to describe the agency's strengths and aspirations. They wanted to increase impact through programs that support real constituent needs. They named equity as fundamental for communities, arts organizations, and artists to succeed.

Feedback from constituents was critical to understand the creative sector's needs. The feedback process began with an extensive survey built and distributed by NASAA. The survey gathered insight from constituents about ArtsWA's role and how the agency can support them. Data from this survey framed the direction and refined the focus of the strategic plan.

The consultants guided ArtsWA through the SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) framework to identify four key areas of focus: **Equity**, **Impact**, **Practice**, and **Programs**. The consultants held a series of regional focus groups to unveil the four focus areas to the public. They facilitated discussion about each focus area to ensure they spoke to constituents' needs.

Equity refers to the agency's crosscutting objective to increase efforts around social justice, equity, and diversity. ArtsWA retained this objective from the previous strategic plan. Equity is central to the agency's core values and touches every aspect of its work.



Mural on Fourth Avenue East in the Olympia Creative District in downtown Olympia, Washington. Photo courtesy of the City of Olympia.

Impact centers on agency activities that reach stakeholders, funders, and the public. Impact is about the value of arts. It is a measure of how the agency tells the story of the arts and how it seeks funding for programs to grow and strengthen the creative sector.

Practice outlines the internal agency policies and practices that direct ArtsWA to be an efficient, effective steward of state resources.

Programs concerns the external programs of the agency. This aspiration lays out goals and strategies to make each program more successful and give constituents more access to arts and culture.

These four aspirations will guide ArtsWA's work for the next five years. The agency will revisit this plan each year to assess progress and alignment. ArtsWA will adopt new ideas and approaches as needed to keep the plan responsive to emerging needs in the field.

This strategic framework is the product of a thoughtful and intentional process. The agency is grateful for the work of staff, commissioners, and especially NASAA and Confluence Consulting Northwest to shape the agency's vision into a concrete plan. ArtsWA is excited to get to work to see these strategies and goals through to fruition.

Meet ArtsWA

ArtsWA is the Washington State Arts Commission. It is a state agency formed by the Washington State Legislature in 1961. The agency works to conserve state artistic resources and develop the creative economy. This work is vital to statewide social and economic growth.

The agency's programs reflect the needs of diverse populations, both urban and rural. Funding for the agency comes primarily from state and federal appropriations. The agency is committed to being an accountable steward of public resources. ArtsWA works with partner state agencies and philanthropic groups to ensure arts access and education for all.

ArtsWA knows firsthand the power and value of the arts. The arts add to the quality of life and cultural heritage of Washingtonians. They drive the state economy by giving jobs to over 185,000 people.* They promote critical thinking and foster academic success. They spark civic discourse and collective problem-solving.

ArtsWA values diversity, equity, and inclusion. ArtsWA focuses on social justice to ensure that its programs model inclusion and address inequities. This stems from the belief that Washingtonians should have access to and enjoy artistic expression in their lives.

* NASAA

Ballet Folklórico de Tacoma with ArtsWA Executive Director Karen Hanan (front, second from right) and Grants to Organizations Program Manager Miguel Guillén (front, right) at Arts & Heritage Day, 2019.



Staff and Board of Commissioners

ArtsWA employs approximately 25 people. The staff develop and administer the agency's programs and manage its daily operations. The Board of Commissioners has 23 members. The Governor appoints nineteen of the commissioners to three-year terms. The Legislature appoints four (two from the House, two from the Senate). The Board oversees advocacy and visioning activities for the agency.

Board of Commissioners

Justin Raffa, Chair	Joan McBride
Robin Avni	Monica Miller
Andre Bouchard	Catherine Nueva España
Claudia Castro Luna	Faaluaina S. Pritchard
Dr. Kelvin Frank	Charlie Robin
Wesley Jessup	Rosanna Sharpe
Linley Logan	Judy Tuohy
Lee Lyttle	Sen. Lisa Wellman
Jasmine Mahmoud	Sheree Wen
Diane Martindale	Rep. Sharon Wylie
Rep. Jacquelin Maycumber	Reinaldo Gil Zambrano

Staff

Karen Hanan, Director	Audrey Molloy
Michelle Avitia	Jared Moore
Judy Cullen	Savanna Perez
Adam Fah	Valerie Peterman
Heide Fernandez-Llamazares	Leslie Pope
Miguel Guillén	Annette Roth
Janae Huber	Alexis Sarah
Linnea Ingalls	Deane Shellman
Kristy Keely	Michael Sweney
Adrienne Kerrigan	Michael Wallenfels
Tamar Krames	Langston Wilkins
Marissa Laubscher	Chuck Zimmer

Mission & Vision

Mission: ArtsWA is a catalyst for the arts, advancing the role of the arts in the lives of individuals and communities throughout the state.

Vision: Art & creativity are essential to wellbeing, woven into the fabric of vibrant communities throughout Washington State.

Programs and Activities

ArtsWA has a range of programs that support the arts throughout Washington State. These are the primary programs of the agency.

Art in Public Places. The public art program manages and protects the State Art Collection, a shared cultural resource. The Collection contains 5,000 artworks in more than 1,300 state buildings, colleges, universities, and K-12 schools across the state.

Grants to Organizations. ArtsWA provides grant funding to nonprofit and fiscally sponsored arts and community organizations statewide. Funding for grants comes from state, federal, and private funds.

Creative Districts. ArtsWA helps communities turn arts and culture activities into economic growth. This program provides grants and technical assistance to these state-designated communities.

Arts in Education. ArtsWA supports arts learning as a part of basic education for all PreK-12 students. This program expands arts education access through grants, professional development, youth leadership opportunities, and ongoing research.

Center for Washington Cultural Traditions. The CWCT surveys, studies, and supports folk and traditional arts to increase access to Washington's rich and diverse cultural heritage. ArtsWA and Humanities Washington jointly manage this program.

State Poet Laureate. Poets laureate work to build awareness of Washington State's poetry legacy through public readings and presentations throughout the state. ArtsWA and Humanities Washington jointly manage this program.

Wellness, Arts, and the Military. This program works to support the health and wellbeing of military-connected populations through creative art therapies and community arts programs.

Right: ArtsWA Conservation Manager Adam Fah cleans Rainbow Bridge (1980) by Donald Barrie in preparation for display. The artwork was installed in its new home at Amistad Elementary in Richland in 2021.



Strategic Planning Process

2017-21 Strategic Plan

In 2017, ArtsWA built a strategic plan that covered a five-year period through 2021. This plan had five main goals and one crosscutting objective:

- **Goal 1:** Expand arts participation in communities across Washington State, with a focus on cultural equity, to ensure all people have access to the arts.
- **Goal 2:** Build leadership and resources in and for the arts.
- **Goal 3:** Activate and enhance public buildings and campuses through the acquisition, stewardship, and presentation of the State Art Collection.
- **Goal 4:** Strengthen arts education as part of and fundamental to K-12 basic education.
- **Goal 5:** Advance efficient, effective, and relevant practices across all agency programs and services.
- **Crosscutting Objective:** Increase our specific and intentional efforts around social justice by ensuring that ArtsWA-funded activities and work are reflective of Washington's diverse populations including cultural diversity, artistic disciplines, geographic locations, and underserved populations.

The strategic plan reflected the work and needs of the agency at the time. It focused on actions that programs could take to achieve the crosscutting objective. The agency also added programs during that time to support the creative sector's growth.

COVID-19's effects on the Creative Sector

Washington State has one of the most robust creative sectors in the nation. It makes up almost 9% of the state economy and employs over 185,000 Washingtonians. It produces more than \$53 billion in yearly revenue for state businesses and communities.*

COVID-19 restrictions in 2020 and 2021 hit the sector hard. Arts and culture organizations were the first to close and among the last to re-open. ArtsWA worked diligently to prevent the collapse of the sector. The agency changed its existing grants into relief and recovery grants. The agency sought and received additional relief funding from the federal government and the state legislature. This added funding became grants and extensive technical support that stabilized the sector and prevented massive losses.

The sector is still in recovery and the future is uncertain. The pandemic devastated communities of color, rural areas, and regions with fewer economic resources. ArtsWA believes that a commitment to equity is key to full recovery. This commitment to equity is central to the agency's processes and practices.

* NASAA

The agency is keenly aware that full sector recovery will take time. As reflected in this strategic plan, the focus is on long-term support of the sector as it rebounds from the pandemic.

COVID-19 taught the world to be prepared for disruption. ArtsWA heeded this lesson and incorporated it into its strategic planning process, goals, strategies, and outcomes.

What Was the Process?

In spring 2021, ArtsWA began its strategic planning process. The agency worked with Confluence Consulting Northwest (CCN) and the NASAA. CCN is a woman-owned consulting firm based in Olympia. NASAA is the national service organization for state arts agencies. It is based in Washington, D.C. CCN was the main consultant and facilitator of the process. This included an online constituent survey, interviews with staff and commissioners, statewide community round tables, and multiple planning sessions.

Constituent Survey

ArtsWA worked with NASAA to design and analyze a statewide survey. The online survey gathered input from citizens during June and July of 2021. The respondents gave candid feedback on specific questions related to programs, services, and satisfaction. Approximately 599 people across Washington State took the survey. *See Appendix C for additional information.*

Internal Interviews and Planning Sessions

Confluence Consulting interviewed ArtsWA staff members and commissioners in early summer 2021. They organized the feedback into four major focus areas. CCN held a retreat for staff and commissioners in August 2021 to give feedback and discuss the findings. CCN then held planning sessions with each agency program to refine their goals. Through one-on-one meetings and group discussions, ArtsWA chose the four *aspirations* outlined in this plan.

Community Focus Groups

ArtsWA convened five regional online focus groups in January 2022. The agency hosted two meetings for the Northwest region and one for each of the three remaining regions. Members of the public reviewed the four aspirations and high-level goals and gave feedback. Around 150 people registered for these events. CCN and ArtsWA incorporated public feedback into the plan. *See Appendix A for additional information.*

Language and Definitions

ArtsWA believes it is important for the Strategic Plan to be accessible and easy to read. Several key terms are defined here to help understand the goals and strategies. If you have questions about any other terms or language in the strategic plan, please contact us at info@arts.wa.gov.

BIPOC – *BIPOC* is an acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. The term emerged in 2020 to acknowledge that these communities continue to face historic inequity.

Community Arts Organizations – *Community Arts Organizations* are local hubs for art- and culture-based activity. They take on different forms and responsibilities in response to the needs and makeup of the communities they serve.

Creative Economy – The *Creative Economy* is the money and resources produced by the Creative Sector. It refers to common economic components like jobs, income, tax revenue, and gross domestic product (GDP). The health and growth of the Creative Economy is one of the agency's main concerns.

Creative Sector – The *Creative Sector* refers to the types of businesses and individuals that do creative work. This includes arts non-profits (like theatres), businesses (like media production companies), and individual artists (like sculptors). It also includes businesses such as software developers, tattoo parlors, and more. The Creative Sector generated 10.3% of Washington's GDP in 2020.

DEI – *DEI* is an acronym that stands for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Diversity and Equity are defined below. *Inclusion* means that everyone has value. It states that all voices should be heard and given respect.

Diverse groups / Diversity – *Diverse groups* and *diversity* are broad terms that describe the many groups and subgroups that ArtsWA serves. Race, ethnicity, and gender are common topics in discussions around diversity. But there is much more to consider. Gender identity, age, sexual orientation, spoken language, geographic area, cultural background, physical ability, neurodiversity, and military connectedness are all included in this definition. Each individual person has a unique relationship to these groups and subgroups. That is why when ArtsWA speaks about diversity, it is speaking about serving as many people as possible.

Equity – *Equity* is fairness and justice. Equity recognizes that there is not one size that fits all. We are all different and do not have the same advantages and challenges. Equity is a way for ArtsWA to think about these imbalances and adjust how the agency serves its constituents. It is different from equality. Equality means giving everyone the same amount.

Underseved – *Underserved* means “populations whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, historical exclusion and marginalization due to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, economics, disability, or other social or institutionally imposed barriers.” (WAC 30-02-010)



Washington State Poet Laureate Rena Priest speaks at “Poetry and Civic Life” at Hugo House in Seattle, Washington. Priest is Washington’s first indigenous Poet Laureate.

Aspirational Framework, Goals, and Strategies

ArtsWA sees the challenges and growing complexity of the modern world. The agency is determined to be responsive to structural inequities and the pandemic's ongoing impact.

ArtsWA staff formed an aspirational framework to guide their work for the next five years. The goals and strategies include input from the Board of Commissioners and constituent surveys. The framework guides the agency toward increased funding, improved constituent services, and effective organizational systems.

The four identified aspirational areas are **Equity, Impact, Practice, and Programs**.

Washington's new PEAR (Pro-Equity Anti-Racist) Initiative is built directly into this plan. Governor Inslee's Executive Order states that the "PEAR Plan & Playbook is designed to bridge opportunity gaps and reduces disparities so everyone in Washington flourishes and achieves their full potential." These values and ambitions are at the core of ArtsWA's work. Goals and strategies that directly align with PEAR are noted throughout the plan with a ● symbol.



Equity

Embody a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion that serves all Washingtonians.

Equity is a primary value of the agency. In ArtsWA's previous strategic plan, equity was the crosscutting objective. It underpinned the plan's goals and objectives. It was the lens the agency used to make decisions about program activities.

For this plan, ArtsWA sought to deepen its focus on equity. The agency has kept equity as a lens to inform agency decision making. It will now shift those efforts on equity into clearly actionable goals and achievable outcomes.

As a state agency, ArtsWA can increase fairness and justice for Washingtonians in meaningful ways. The goals listed under "Equity" are concrete steps ArtsWA will take to support and reflect the diversity of Washington State while providing equitable access to the arts for as many people as possible.

Goal: Represent all Washingtonians in our Staff & Programming.

Primary Owners: All Agency

- 1. Hire and retain diverse staff to form a workforce that reflects the state's demographics.
 - a. Review hiring processes to identify barriers to diversity of hires and remove these barriers where possible.
 - b. Support remote work when possible to include people from diverse locations.
 - c. Explore possibilities of satellite offices and coworking spaces beyond the I-5 corridor.
- 2. Include people from diverse backgrounds on all panels and committees.
 - a. Reflect the diversity of our state when forming panels and committees.
 - b. Allow youth and young adults to give input on policies and practices that affect youth access to the arts, heritage, and cultural sectors.
- 3. Reflect Washington's diverse communities in the State Art Collection.
 - a. Increase the diversity of artists represented in the State Art Collection.
 - b. Build opportunities for rural and underserved communities to receive original artwork.

Left: Chieko Phillips (left) and Barbara Earl Thomas (right) at the 2016 Governor's Arts & Heritage Awards. Thomas was an Individual Artist Award honoree. Photo courtesy of Eva Blanchard Photography.

Equity (continued)

Goal: Deepen Relationships with Tribes.

Primary Owners: All Agency

- 1. Hire a tribal / indigenous communities liaison.
 - a. Appeal to state policy on tribal engagement through the Office of Indian Affairs.
 - b. Work with the Legislature and Governor to fund and support this role.
- 2. Grow opportunities for tribal engagement in Heritage Arts and other agency programs.
 - a. Create a tribal outreach and engagement plan.
 - b. Create regular entry points for tribes to contribute to ArtsWA's programs and strategic direction.
 - c. Bring Native artists, educators, and administrators into program planning.
 - d. Create programs to expand collaboration with Native youth in creative fields.
- 3. Expand tribal engagement through programs.
 - a. Allocate resources for Creative Districts on tribal lands.
 - b. Partner with OSPI's Office of Native Education and support "Since Time Immemorial" Curriculum through AIE programs.
- 4. Develop a framework to work with tribal governments on State Art Collection re-siting, loans, and acquisitions.
- 5. Support Native military Veterans and Native military-connected populations that engage in arts and creative programs.



Goal: Engage Diverse Communities in the Creative Economy.

Primary Owners: All Agency

- 1. Support diversity among ArtsWA vendors, contractors, and artists.
- 2. Build and refine cross-program methods to track and grow vendor diversity.
- 3. Make outreach and engagement plans.
- 4. Work with Department of Enterprise Services to make sure that ArtsWA's purchasing follows procedures designed to include diverse providers.
- 5. Develop systems to track compliance with vendor diversity policies.
- 6. Find additional funding for the Center for Washington Cultural Traditions to expand its capacity and impact.
- 7. Create a Language Access Plan that aligns with best practices for state agencies.
 - a. Convene a Language Access working group.
 - b. Convene partners in multilingual communities as trusted voices for culturally appropriate communication.
 - c. Allocate labor and financial resources to complete a plan in accordance with state and federal guidelines.
8. Strengthen and grow participation in the Creative Economy.
 - a. Design seed grant opportunities for creative industry startups.
 - b. Create training and related grant or stipend opportunities for teaching artists.
 - c. Form partnerships between military-connected teaching artists and community arts organizations.
 - d. Support community arts organizations that serve female, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, foreign national, and rural community members.
 - e. Partner with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs and other organizations to familiarize teaching artists and arts partners with military culture, processes, and programs.

Left: Dancers from the Asia Pacific Cultural Center perform at the 2016 Governor's Arts & Heritage Awards. Asia Pacific Cultural Center was a Heritage Organization Award honoree. Photo courtesy of Eva Blanchard Photography.

Impact

Amplify the power of arts and culture through communications and funding strategies.

ArtsWA's mission is to advance the role of arts in the lives of all Washingtonians. To do this well, ArtsWA must tell the story of the economic and social value of the arts, culture, and creativity. The agency must also make sure that it has adequate funds to support and grow the state's creative sector. Goals in this aspirational area focus on actions the agency will take to increase its reach to stakeholders, funders, and the public.

Goal: Communicate Effectively with Organizations and Communities.

Primary Owners: Communications

1. Develop an annual communications plan that reflects ArtsWA strategic priorities and program activities.
 - a. Identify key constituents for communications that advance ArtsWA's strategic direction. Include groups with whom the agency has not had successful communication in the past.
 - b. Develop or harness existing metrics to show the impact of ArtsWA on economic and social health.
 - c. Plan holistic communications activities around agency and programmatic work.
 - d. Host regular opportunities to collect input and feedback from constituents.
2. Develop compelling narratives about ArtsWA programs, the arts, and creativity.
 - a. Develop storytelling about ArtsWA constituents from all geographic areas of the state. Include stories about diverse populations and non-grants programmatic activities, including pandemic recovery.
 - b. Share data-driven content with constituents about agency effectiveness, programmatic activities, and goals.
 - c. Change core language from *arts* centric to *creative* centric to widen understanding of the impact of creative endeavors.
3. Refine Community Relations activities such as the Governor's Arts & Heritage Awards (GAHA) and Arts, Heritage & Science Day to reflect ArtsWA strategic priorities.
 - a. Ensure that activities are relevant to the times, impactful to constituents, and aligned with ArtsWA strategic priorities.
4. Ensure content on the agency website and social media accounts is timely and accessible.
 - a. Explore new technologies and channels as needed.
 - b. Update platforms to reflect trends in online communications and best practices.

Goal: Communicate Effectively with Authorizing Funders and Partners.

Primary Owners: Executive Director, Commissioners

1. Diversify advocacy efforts.
 - a. Increase action-oriented communications for legislators.
 - b. Spotlight communications that speak to the economic and social value of arts funding.
2. Anticipate and advocate for operational funding needs that arise from legislative and agency changes.
3. Highlight efforts specific to the cultural and inclusive value of arts funding.
4. Increase commissioner knowledge about advocacy through the onboarding process.
 - a. Improve Commissioner's Guidebook and Advocacy Toolkit with programmatic and agency information. Illustrate the commissioners' specific roles.
5. Increase commissioner-level interactions with state legislators and authorizing funders.
 - a. Encourage and increase commissioner relationship-building with legislators and local leaders. Place special focus on engaging outside of session. Strive to address issues before they arise.
 - b. Develop new opportunities and events to connect legislators with commissioners.
 - c. Report regularly on a metric for commissioner advocacy.
6. Advocate for the needs of the growing and aging State Art Collection.
 - a. Secure adequate conservation resources to meet Collection needs.

Teens participating in Duwamish Youth Corps designed, created, and installed Black Lives Matter art murals through South Park community, 2020. Free2Luv, a Grants to Organization funding recipient, managed the project. Photo courtesy of Free2Luv.



Impact (continued)

Goal: Identify Funding Needs for Ongoing & New Work.

Primary Owners: Executive Director, Operational Staff, Commissioners

1. Ensure programs and operational processes are in place to support staff needs.
 - a. Research best practices on workload assessment and capacity measurements.
 - b. Apply chosen assessment to ArtsWA.
 - c. Make recommendations for program and operational changes to return to sustainable post COVID-19 work practices.
- 2. Fund new positions specific to meeting DEI and impact goals.
 - a. Hire a Partnership Coordinator to grow partnerships with organizations led by diverse groups.
 - b. Hire a Veteran liaison.
 - c. Hire Tribal Liaison.
3. Fund existing and new positions for sustainability.
 - a. Fully fund Poet Laureate position.
 - b. Assess operational needs for funding technical support and other roles.
 - c. Fund additional support and administrative staff to bring current workloads on existing staff down to sustainable levels.
 - d. Survey salaries to ensure alignment with state best practices.
 - e. Secure resources to grow collection care staff to provide appropriate maintenance services.
4. Increase granting capacity through greater funding.
 - a. Increase State and Federal grant dollars available.
 - b. Hire the appropriate number of administrative staff to ensure programmatic success.

Practice

Strengthen policies and practices to effectively support and grow constituent services.

A government agency, like any organization, performs best when it has strong policies and practices. Policies are the rules that define what ArtsWA can and cannot do. Practices are the ways that ArtsWA interacts with outside groups, such as nonprofits and other agencies. Practice also refers to the way ArtsWA staff operate as a team. The goals in this area show how ArtsWA plans to use policies and practices to be efficient and sustainable.

Goal: Support Learning & Growth for Agency, Artists, and Creative Organizations.

Primary Owners: All Agency

1. Formally allocate time and resources for regular professional development and best practices.
 - a. Set up training to build fluency in inclusive practices.
 - b. Set up ongoing DEI training.
 - c. Set up personalized training opportunities in individual program areas.
2. Create opportunities for professional and leadership development for artists, creative workers, youth, teaching artists, educators, and organizations.
 - a. Partner with community arts organizations to build training and education opportunities.
3. Build succession planning into key roles.
 - a. Cultivate leadership among staff, board, and constituents.
 - b. Assess succession needs for the next 5 to 10 years.

Goal: Provide Comprehensive Foundational Support for Budget and Operations Systems.

Primary Owners: Business & Operations

1. Establish and maintain robust operations policies and procedures.
 - a. Align all agency policies and procedures.
 - b. Work with an IT coordinator to craft a technology policy that aligns with WaTech directives.
 - c. Streamline software access by shifting authorizations to Operations where applicable.
 - d. Write a strong Continuity of Operations Plan. Include protocols for emergent events.
 - e. Document or map key procedures.
2. Leverage technology for proactive solutions to operating systems and processes.
 - a. Work with WaTech to explore a range of technology solutions to increase agency efficiency.
 - b. Update and improve agency tools for sharing documents and information.



Carletta Carrington Wilson shows a portion of her work letter to a laundress. This work was published by Raven Chronicles Press, a Grants to Organizations funding recipient. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Practice (continued)

3. Work with an IT coordinator to train agency staff on the use of available technologies.
 - a. Leverage training tools available to the state, including the state's Learning Management System, LinkedIn training, Government Finance Officers Association, and other industry resources.
4. Plan for growth strategically.
 - a. Methodically assess resource needs for new budget requests and legislatively mandated programs.
 - b. Check in regularly with all agency programs about upcoming changes to proactively assess needs.
 - c. Regularly evaluate where roles and staffing may need development or diversification to support agency growth.
5. Lead planning and evaluations on agency-wide growth support.
 - a. Evaluate and plan for space and building needs.
 - b. Evaluate and plan for supply chain changes.
 - c. Actively participate in post COVID-19 and return-to-work planning.
 - d. Evaluate programs, processes, and policies for barriers to engagement with and leadership opportunities for underrepresented populations.

Goal: Foster an effective and innovative agency culture.

Primary Owners: All Agency

1. Integrate the strategic plan into agency work.
 - a. Establish a yearly refresh process for the plan.
 - b. Develop program-specific plans as needed.
2. Be accountable at all levels of the organization.
 - a. Clarify roles and responsibilities where necessary.
 - b. Understand the roles and accountability of stakeholders.
 - c. Convey accountability measures to relevant stakeholder audiences.
3. Make decisions that support organizational health.
 - a. Evaluate and understand cultural factors to improve agency performance and effectiveness.
 - b. Encourage innovation through experimentation and risk tolerance.
 - c. Practice and acknowledge creative values internally and externally.
 - d. Place work/life balance and overall staff wellness as a core value that elevates ArtsWA as an Employer of Choice.

Practice (continued)

Goal: Develop and share metrics of success that align with agency values, vision, and mission.

Primary Owners: All Agency

1. Use data to measure success and pathways to success.
 - a. Standardize the process and schedules for data collection and analysis.
 - b. Use metrics to prioritize agency and program work.
 - c. Assess the need for a Data Analytics staff position.
 - d. Get software to facilitate regular data collection and customer communication.
2. Align impact analysis measures.
 - a. Create short-, mid-, and long-term measures for impact.
 - b. Harvest data from Federal, State, local, and community stakeholders.
 - c. Design and analyze grantee surveys to assess constituent experience and access.
3. Create metrics to assess diversity of engagement.
 - a. Research best practices for diversity and inclusion metrics.
 - b. Set a regular schedule to review engagement data.
 - c. Use state data to help define parameters.
4. Encourage better data collection and impact analysis from organizations and community groups.
 - a. Help organizations to define standards of measurement to track data points such as donations and volunteer hours.
 - b. Partner with large arts agencies to centralize and collect data about the creative sector.

Programs

Evolve agency programs and grant-making to increase constituent opportunity and access to the arts.

ArtsWA's programs are its most important tools for supporting Washington's creative sector. From theatres and galleries to schools and shops, each program targets a specific part of the creative sector for support. Each program has specific goals and strategies to deepen their impact and broaden their reach.

Goal: Acquire and care for a State Art Collection that is impactful, accessible, and valued.

Primary Owners: Art in Public Places (AIPP)

1. Advance and support art and artists across Washington.
 - a. Offer new points of entry into the State Art Collection for artists working at all stages of their career and in diverse media.
 - b. Make the work of artists visible and valued through "My Public Art Portal" and ArtsWA communications tools.
2. Strengthen partner engagement and appreciation of the State Art Collection.
 - a. Address partner needs and community values in our work.
 - b. Support maintenance partnerships across the state.
 - c. Deepen partner agency engagement with artworks through "My Public Art Portal."
3. Nurture a lasting State Art Collection.
 - a. Provide conservation guidance during artwork acquisition.
 - b. Maintain artworks in the State Art Collection at a reasonable interval.
 - c. Develop an emergency plan to ensure safety of the State Art Collection.
 - d. Identify flexible and reliable storage and workspace for long-term and emergent needs.
4. Advocate for the needs of the growing and aging Collection.
 - a. Grow collection care staff to provide appropriate maintenance services.
 - b. Secure adequate conservation resources to meet Collection needs.
5. Celebrate and share the State Art Collection.
 - a. Continually expand and make visible "My Public Art Portal" as a living, growing resource.
 - b. Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Art in Public Places program.

Programs (continued)

Goal: Increase the Capacity for Impact of the Center for Washington Cultural Traditions.

Primary Owner: Center for Washington Cultural Traditions (CWCT)

- 1. Increase capacity for outreach to rural and underserved communities with additional staff.
 - a. Place new CWCT staff at ArtsWA.
 - b. Grow and evolve the Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program.
2. Create and launch a folk and traditional arts grant program.
 - a. Research best practices for similar grant programs.
 - b. Identify funding resources for a grant program focused on traditional arts.
 - c. Design and implement an impactful grant program.
3. Build partnerships to increase or create performance and demonstration opportunities for folk and traditional artists throughout the state.
 - a. Formalize and expand partnerships for greater impact and sustainability.
 - b. Identify other state, local, and tribal agencies as prospective partners.
4. Develop a statewide roster of folk and traditional artists throughout the state.
 - a. Research collaborative opportunities that align with ArtsWA's Community of Care Program.
5. Formalize and expand our outreach and communications plans in coordination with Humanities Washington staff.
6. Leverage and develop partnerships to build a statewide folk and traditional arts archive with wide public access.
 - a. Research best practices and existing archives in other states or locations.
 - b. Research accessible locations and spatial requirements for an archive.
 - c. Research virtual archive methodologies and best practices.

Goal: Build Leadership and Resources for the Wellness, Arts, and the Military Program.

Primary Owner: Wellness, Arts, and the Military (WAM)

1. Identify state, public, and other funding sources.
2. Integrate WAM into the Community of Care initiative.
3. Build partnerships with Federal, State, and local Veterans Services Organizations (VSO).
 - a. Cultivate shared values, methods, and outcomes between arts and Veteran WAM programming.
 - b. Educate stakeholders, legislators, and community leadership. Use stories and data to illustrate the impact of the arts on the wellness of military-connected populations.
4. Invest in Community Arts programs that support arts and creative experiences for military-connected populations.
 - a. Form grant program strategies to support arts and creative engagement with diverse and underserved military-connected populations.

- b. Sponsor convenings, professional development, and training opportunities.
 - c. Commit staff time and resources for military-connected events, programs, and gatherings.
5. Develop best practices and standards for engagement with military-connected populations.
- a. Use best practices for administering arts and creative programming for military-connected populations.
 - b. Improve navigation and communication channels between military-connected clinics and community arts and creative programs.
 - c. Engage in professional development.

Master storyteller Charity Bagatsing Doyl (right) taught apprentice Joellen Doyl (left) the oral storytelling tradition of the Philippine Ifugao Tribe. Charity and Joellen were a 2021-2022 Heritage Arts Apprenticeship Program (HAAP) pair. Photo courtesy of HAAP.



Programs (continued)

Goal: Support Statewide Access to Arts Education for all PreK-12 Students.

Primary Owner: Arts in Education (AIE)

1. Foster collaboration within the arts education landscape.
 - a. Support partnerships that increase student access to arts education through AIE grants and convenings.
 - b. Support adequate pay for arts educators, teaching artists, and artists working in service of children and youth.
 - c. Expand leadership opportunities for educators, administrators, artists, families, and youth.
 - d. Elevate the visibility and expertise of diverse arts education programs and leaders.
2. Expand learning opportunities for educators working to close the opportunity gap.
 - a. Expand professional learning opportunities and resources for teaching artists and educators.
 - b. Amplify the impact and work of teaching artists.
 - c. Expand the use of arts integration methods in early learning communities.
3. Strengthen youth, educator, and family civic engagement with the arts and cultural sector.
 - a. Invite a diversity of constituents to engage with arts education policy and practice.
 - b. Partner with a diversity of panelists and arts education leaders.
 - c. Expand opportunities for youth leadership within the arts and cultural sector.
 - d. Increase the geographic reach of the Poetry Out Loud Program and the Teaching Artist Training Lab.
4. Ensure arts learning is accessible to all PreK-12 students in Washington State.
 - a. Increase opportunities for students with limited access to arts and cultural programming.
 - b. Expand connections between the arts and social emotional learning.
 - c. Amplify and expand programming that centers underrepresented arts disciplines including literary arts programs and Poetry out Loud.
 - d. Expand student access to arts learning through ArtsWA grants.
5. Elevate the role of arts education in Washington State through Data, Research, and Accountability
 - a. Sustain and refine ongoing arts education research in Washington State.
 - b. Utilize research findings to identify gaps in student access to arts learning.
 - c. Increase public awareness and engagement with arts education research findings.

Goal: Increase the Capacity and Impact of the Community Development Program.

Primary Owners: Community Development

1. Coordinate the Community Development program's work and communications with the Community Relations team.
 - a. Incorporate guidance and strategies around storytelling from the agency communications plan.
 - b. Identify resources to increase outreach to rural and underserved communities across the state.
 - c. Develop new initiatives and programs that support creative sector-related community and economic development
2. Support the development of an external 501(c)(3) foundation.
3. Increase funding and resources for Creative Districts and their local initiatives.
 - a. Increase funding for capital projects.
 - b. Increase startup grant funding to Districts.
 - c. Increase equity for Creative Districts' membership by reducing or removing financial barriers.
 - d. Develop partnerships and resources to increase effectiveness of local Creative District programs. Give support through training and technical assistance.
4. Increase capacity and reach of the ArtsWA-led Change Leader Institute professional development program.
 - a. Develop a year-round training schedule for constituents.
 - b. Identify funding for long-term sustainability.
 - c. Continue to refine and implement an impactful program.
5. Expand the reach and impact of Building for the Arts.
 - a. Develop a roster of potential participants in Building for the Arts.
 - b. Continue to provide relevant information about the application process to potential grantees.

Goal: Expand the reach of grant programs to strengthen rural, diverse, and historically excluded populations.

Primary Owners: Grants to Organizations

- 1. Ensure ArtsWA grants serve diverse populations.
 - a. Deliver grants that focus on cultural equity.
 - b. Develop resources and grants that benefit communities impacted by historic and structural inequity.
 - c. Support ArtsWA's intentional efforts around social justice.
 - d. Remove barriers by simplifying applications and reducing the technology literacy needed to apply.

Programs (continued)

- e. Reframe application questions and evaluation to accommodate all values and styles of communication.
 - f. Provide multiple supports for applications, such as videos, guides, added visuals, and more accessible language.
2. Strengthen local and statewide creative economies through strategic grant programming.
- a. Deliver grants that focus on the day-to-day business operations of arts and culture organizations.
 - b. Deliver grants that expand partnerships between arts and cultural organizations, and tribal, state, and municipal government agencies.
 - c. Increase grant opportunities for new and emerging arts organizations.
 - d. Streamline final reports by simplifying the questions, requirements, and technology platform. Create guides (visual, video, and written) for the final report.
 - e. Clarify contracting and other processes by plain talking language, streamlining design, and keeping contract guides and other processes relevant, current, and simple.
 - f. Provide instructions and an overview on how to move through administrative processes in visual, written, and video form.
 - g. Support grantees in their efforts to connect with their local legislators and decision-makers about the impact of their grant-funded project.

Goal: Strengthen the creative sector across the state, with a focus on cultural equity and community diversity.

Primary Owners: All Agency

- 1. Expand arts participation in Washington communities and ensure that all have access to the arts.
 - a. Encourage a broader presence of interdisciplinary and non-European art forms.
 - b. Hire staff to work with new and emerging organizations to address their unique needs.
- 2. Continue to develop relationships with historically underfunded constituents through improved data use and comprehensive record-keeping.
- 3. Place constituents at the center of agency work and nurture Washington's creative communities.



Youth dance at a dress rehearsal for the Pacific Northwest Ballet's Discover Dance program. Pacific Northwest Ballet was an Arts in Education grant recipient. Photo courtesy of Jazzy Photo.

Looking Ahead

This strategic framework will guide ArtsWA's activities for the next five years. It combines the aspirations of agency staff, commissioners, and stakeholders into a collective vision. The purpose of the plan is to provide the agency with a roadmap for the future.

This plan is a living document. Each year, the agency will revisit and update the plan to reflect new goals and changing conditions. The result will be a vibrant and healthy Washington State, where arts are thriving, celebrated, and essential to the lives of everyone.

Right: Cause and Effect, 2012. Do Ho Suh. Artwork copyright Do Ho Suh. Photo courtesy of Western Washington University, by David Scherrer.



Appendices

Appendix A: SOAR

A **Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results (SOAR)** analysis is a strategic planning tool. It focuses on an organization's current strengths and its vision for the future. This tool differs from the commonly used SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis. SOAR engages all levels and functional areas of an organization, while SWOT is typically a top-down approach. SOAR focuses on what is done well at the organization, rather than concentrating on perceived threats and weaknesses. The SOAR process engages staff, board, and key partners.

The planning team analyzed the four SOAR theme areas. The team approached goal setting by using strengths to leverage opportunities. Defined aspirations help achieve measurable results. The goals, strategies and tactics in the Aspirational Framework reflect these themes.

Below are quotes from the interviews with staff and commissioners that represent the SOAR themes.

1. Strengths

- We are world class in the caliber of our team, their commitment and vision, and the determination of leadership to grow the agency and its capacity to do good things.
- Our statewide scope allows us to impact a large range of diverse communities (both urban and rural).
- We are truly committed to equity and changing systems, working against the legacies of unjust systems, processes, and policies.
- We have capacity to innovate. Ability to pivot programs and activities quickly to support constituents. Willingness to try new things and explore new opportunities and programs.
- We are nimble and strong. We have the unique role of supporting joy, inspiration, and imagination. We support passions, lasting relationships, and engagement.

2. Opportunities

- Cultivating new constituents who may not yet be stakeholders (offering culturally relevant programming and in languages other than English).
- Technology and our new understanding of remote engagement offer new ways to connect and build access for many who haven't had access before.
- More robust partnerships, more diverse stakeholders can broaden our work.
- Working towards equity as part of a national movement in arts organizations.
- Creative Districts & other creative sector projects that elevate and broaden arts conversation and stakeholders.

3. Aspirations

- To broaden the definition of what the arts are and what the arts can do to have people from different backgrounds participate.
- That artists statewide feel supported and seen, and that the wider citizenry holds value for the arts and the funding it receives from the tax base.
- We aspire toward a state in which the arts are taught, practiced, preserved, celebrated, and central to social and economic life.
- To be seen as leaders who understand the needs of local communities and truly contribute to their vibrancy.
- To break the status quo, decolonize our thinking/funding/policies, fund a wave of creativity across the state that is resilient and reflective of communities.
- To have a vision of a much higher per capita funding ranking among the states.

4. Results

- We know we are succeeding when artists statewide increasingly report being supported and seen, and when the public increasingly states support for public funding of the arts.
- Percentage of artworks acquired that have been created by BIPOC, women and underserved communities. Percentage of new hires who are BIPOC. Percentage of grants going to BIPOC, women, and underserved communities.
- Good press, more funding, easier to advocate to legislators, people visibly taking pride in our WA arts contributions.
- Increased investments (via the state budget) for non-program initiatives, such as technical support for artists, emergency funds for artists, grant writing support for small nonprofits, and mentorship stipends.
- Increased number of opportunities, new kinds of arts and programs, new people who have not previously participated in arts programs and new organizations receiving a grant.
- Significant increase in engagement (grant applications, Poets Laureate, etc.) from artists and organizations outside King, Pierce, and Thurston counties.

Appendix B: NASAA Analysis

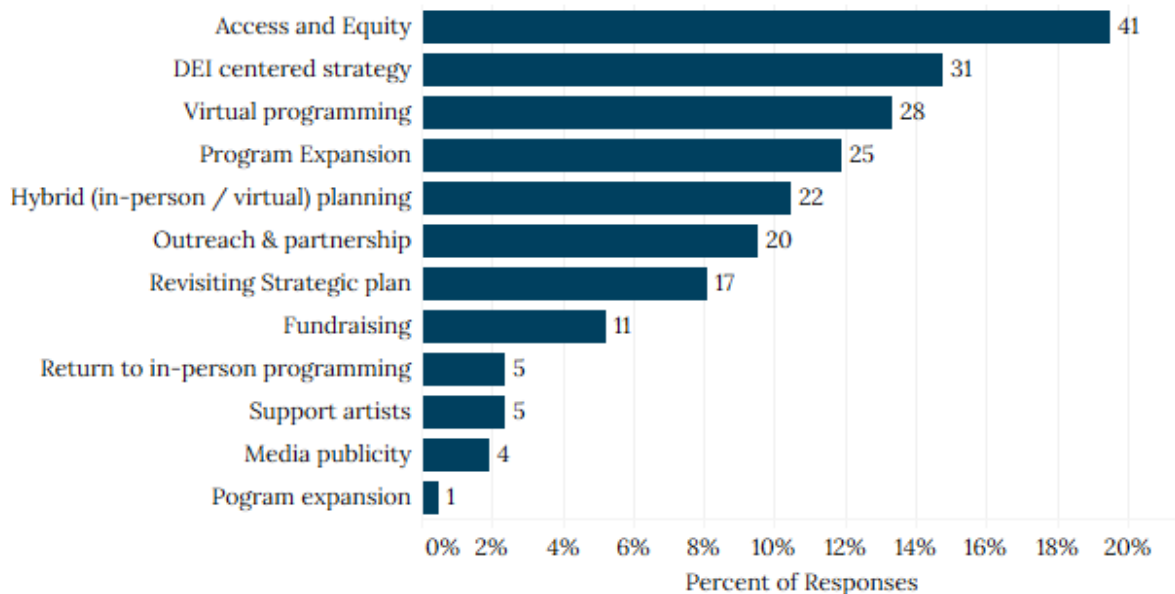
From the introduction to “ArtsWA 2021 Strategic Planning Survey Highlights: This report summarizes key findings from the Washington State Arts Commission’s (ArtsWA’s) 2021 Strategic Planning Survey. In June and July 2021, ArtsWA administered an online survey as part of the agency’s comprehensive strategic planning process. Strategic planning constituent surveys are a common and effective way for public agencies to collect input from citizens and stakeholders to evaluate programs and priorities. This method provided candid feedback to ArtsWA on specific questions related to programs, services, and satisfaction. ArtsWA consulted with the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) to design, administer and analyze this survey.

As the nation’s service organization for state arts agencies, NASAA has extensive experience consulting on state arts agency planning processes and creating similar surveys for states to better understand constituent needs.

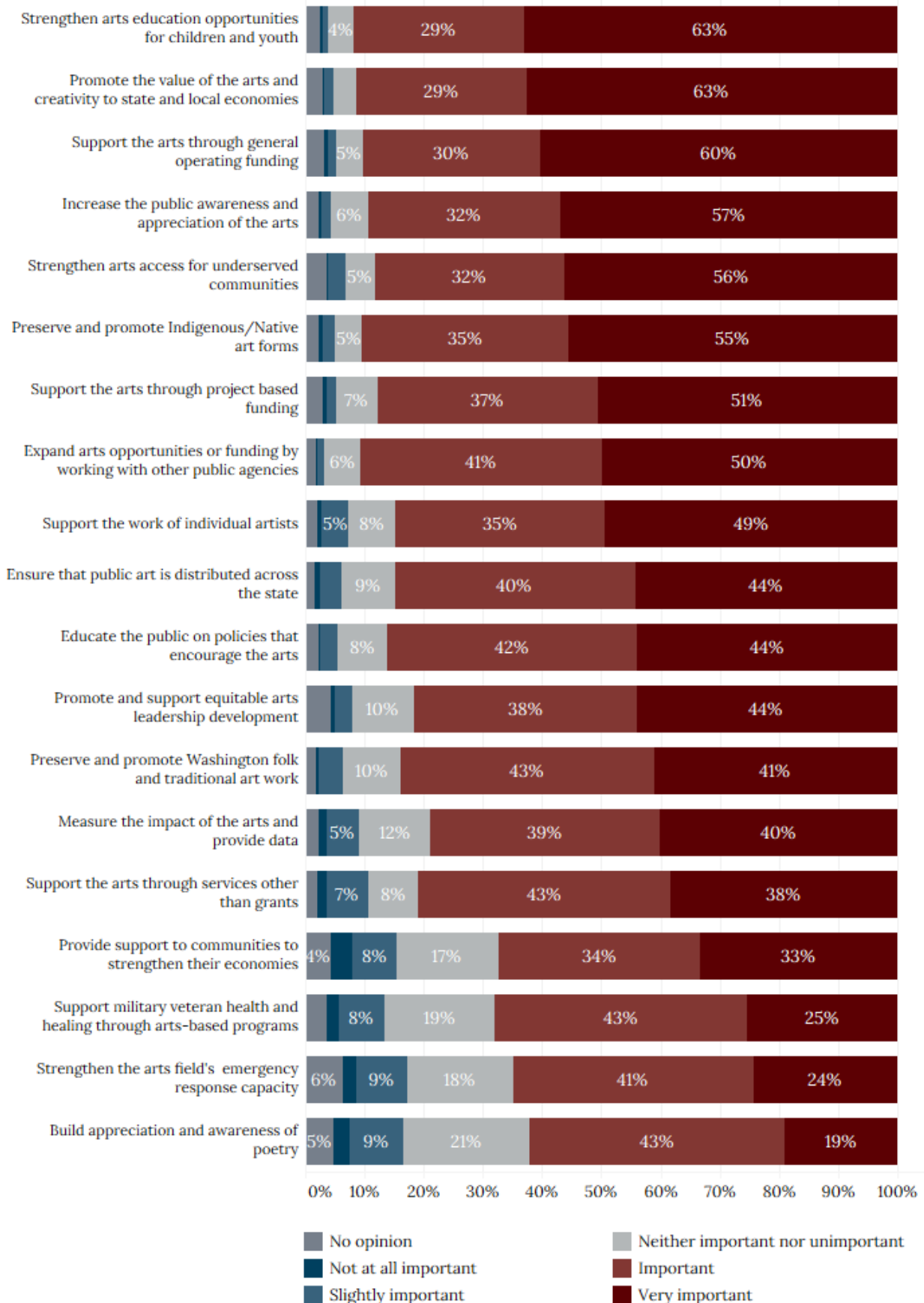
Excerpts are included in this appendix. Read the full report at:

arts.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/ArtWA-Strategic-Planning-Survey-Highlights.pdf

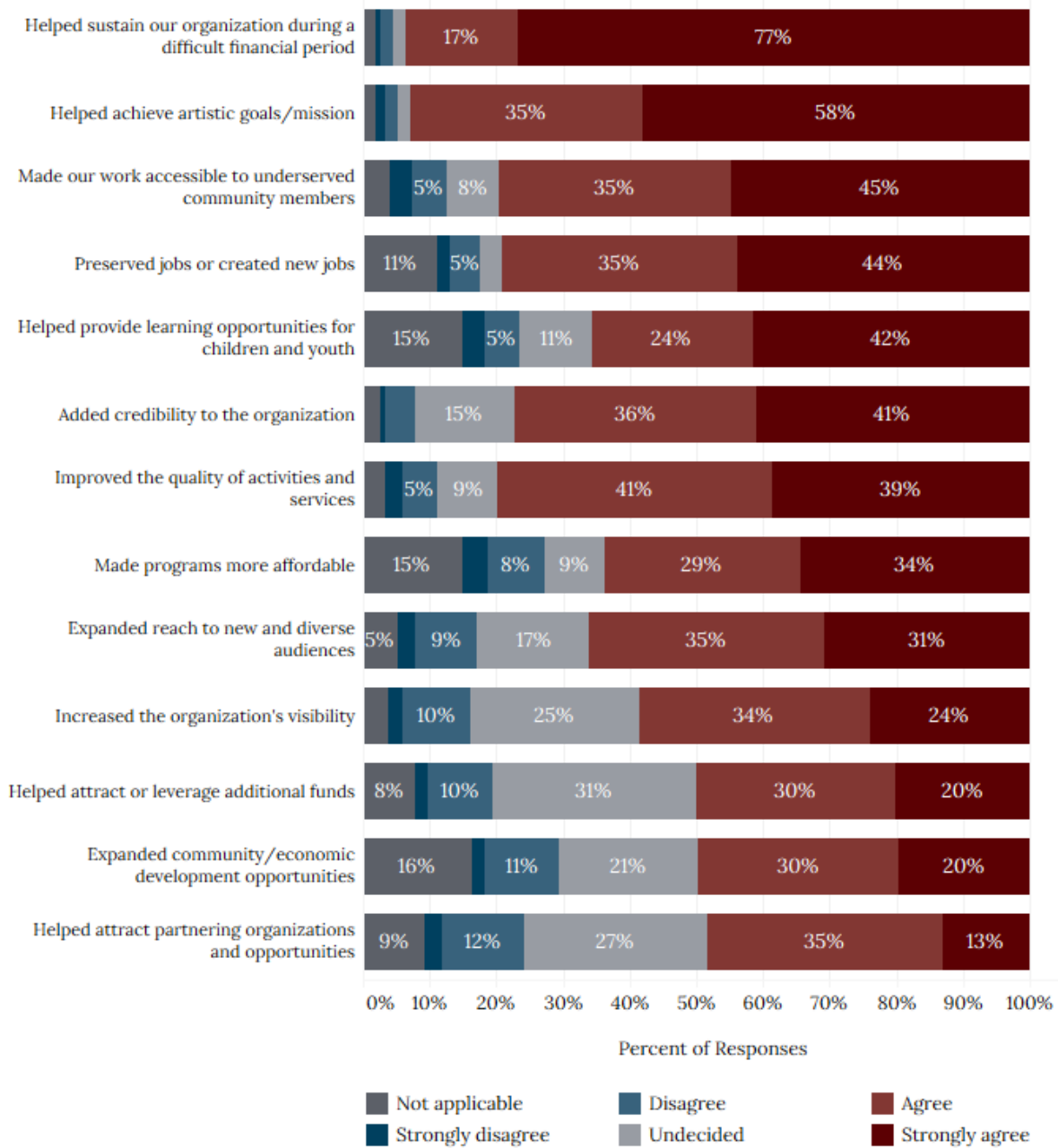
Q14 In what ways do you see your organization's work changing to meet present or future needs? (N=152)



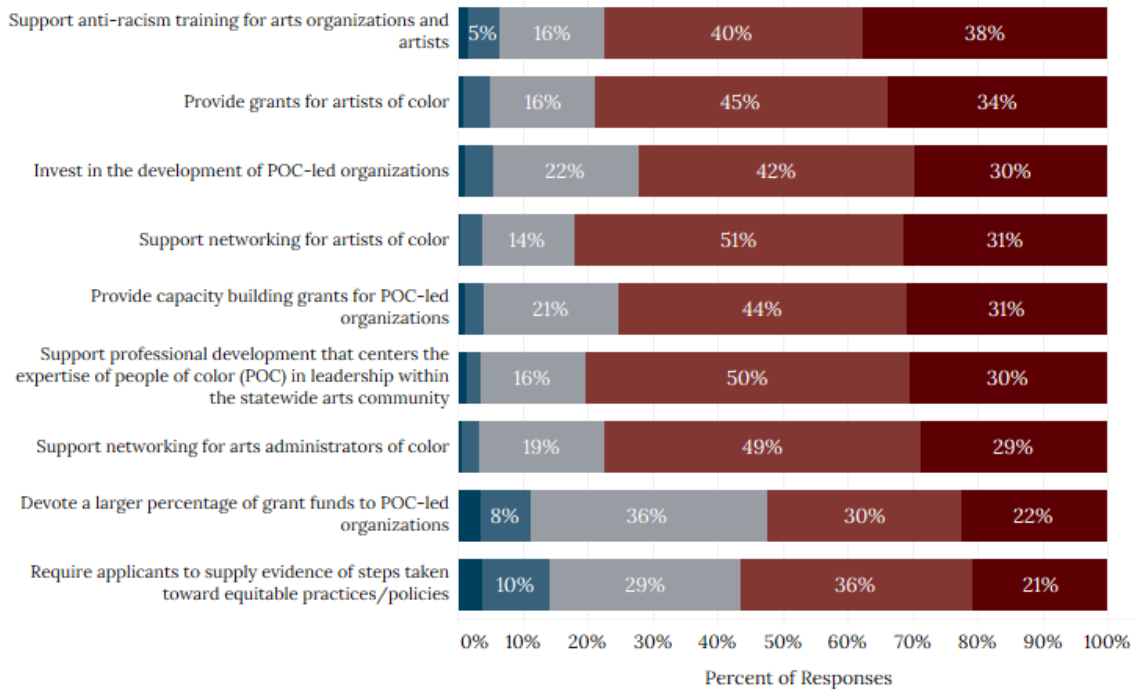
Q3 What do you believe are important roles for ArtsWA? (n = 597)



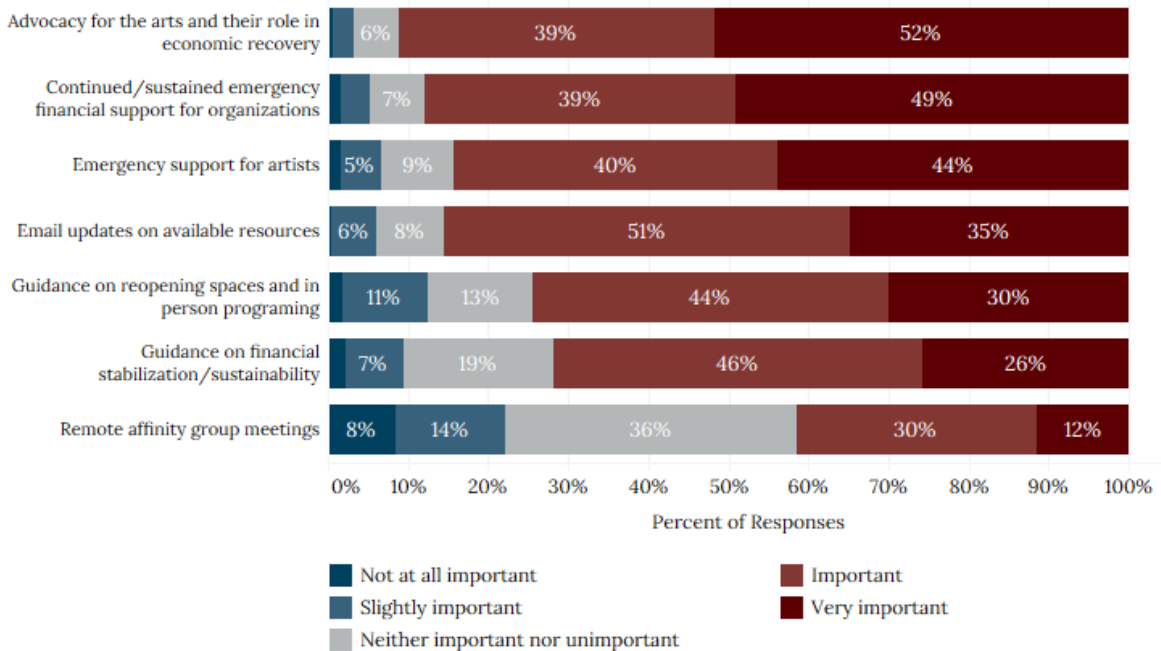
Q13 Did receiving grant funds from ArtsWA benefit you in any of the following ways? (n = 155)



Q43 What are some ways in which ArtsWA should support race equity within the statewide arts community?
(n = 485)



Q41 In response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic how important are the following programs or services?
(n = 488)

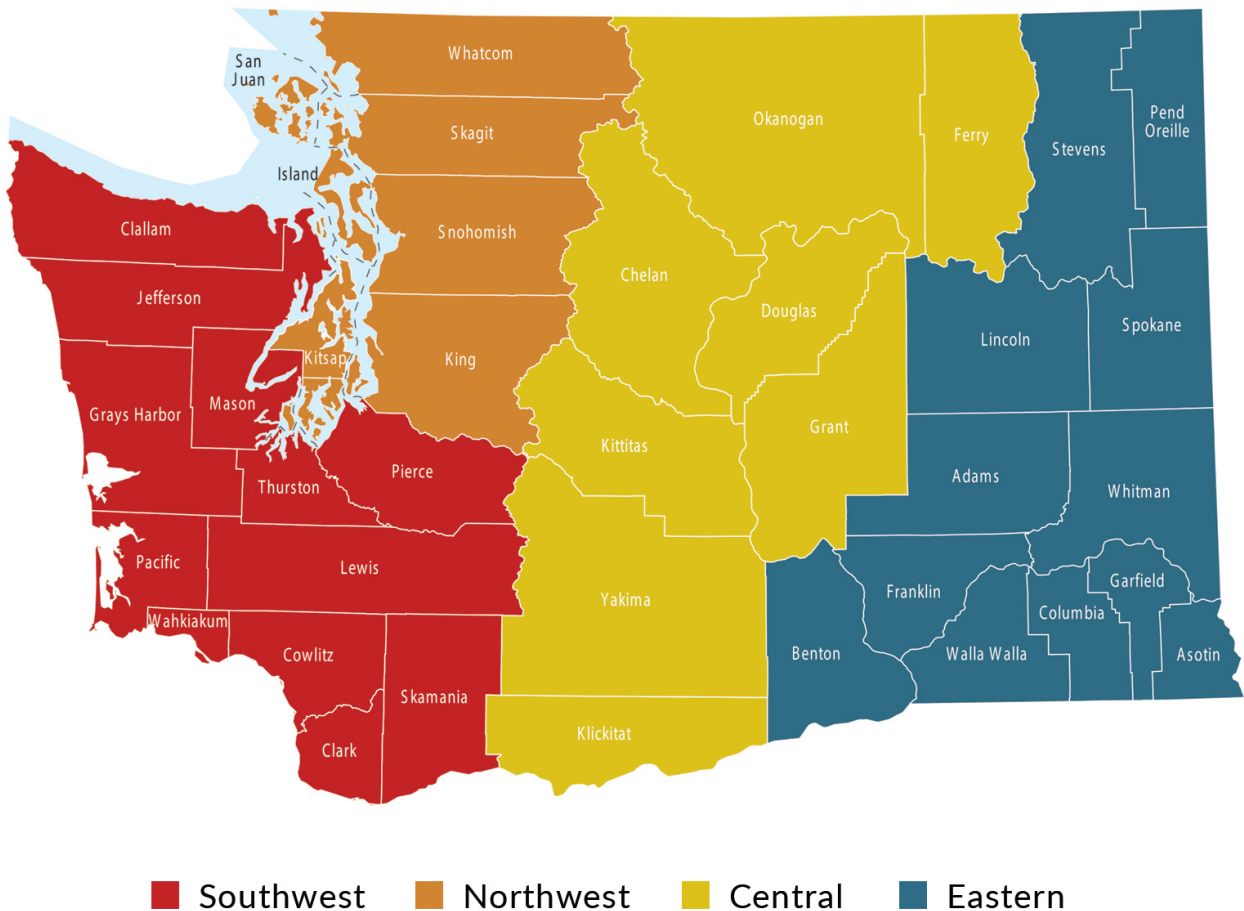


Appendix C: Feedback from Community Forums

Equity:

1. Language access and inclusion of language diversity in planning.
2. Need for intergenerational inclusion.
3. Access and engagement for all.
4. Recognize challenges of representing all Washingtonians.
5. Have people *in* the communities (boots on the ground) in rural and Eastern Washington.
6. Acknowledge access barriers include financial and cultural ones.
7. Accessibility and justice rather than just representation.
8. Smaller rural communities are often less diverse. This challenges grant funding.
9. Need to do intentional outreach to Latinx and native communities.

ArtsWA Region Map



Impact:

1. Communicate the value and worth of the arts.
2. Communication must be two-way, co-creative.
3. Leverage community/cultural hubs.
4. Grant processes can be intimidating and tough for smaller orgs.
5. Clearly need more communication efforts in Eastern Washington.
6. Funding that reaches all the way to artists.
7. COVID recovery is a story we need to be telling.
8. Increase types and channels of outreach/communications.
9. More language around relationships, people, partners.

Practice:

1. Importance of operational funding.
2. Care must be taken in what and how things are measured (data).
3. Data should be supplemented and supported by stories (qualitative) measures.
4. Training needed—hard to implement with volunteer orgs.
5. Make sure “data driven” is a tool, not the purpose.
6. Suggest a “meet ArtsWA” series of engagements in communities.
7. Infrastructure is crucial to success.
8. Data and metrics must be balanced by stories and people.

Programs:

1. Public art needs to connect more to communities.
2. How to find equity between disciplines (visual, performing arts, written/spoken).
3. Live arts (performing) are not seen in these goals.
4. Art as healing post-COVID trauma.
5. Artists are often ‘gig’ workers—how can ArtsWA support them?
6. So many programs! Communicate all the work ArtsWA is doing.
7. Arts in Education: how does inequity play into success for this?
8. Does separating out program goals create silos?



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