



Funding Strategy Adjustments
Community Livability and Public Safety Committee
July 23, 2025



Inspire Olympia Mission

Inspire Olympia provides a reliable source of public funding that sustains a healthy, visible, welcoming, and inclusive nonprofit cultural and science sector, making creative cultural experiences accessible to everyone in Olympia.

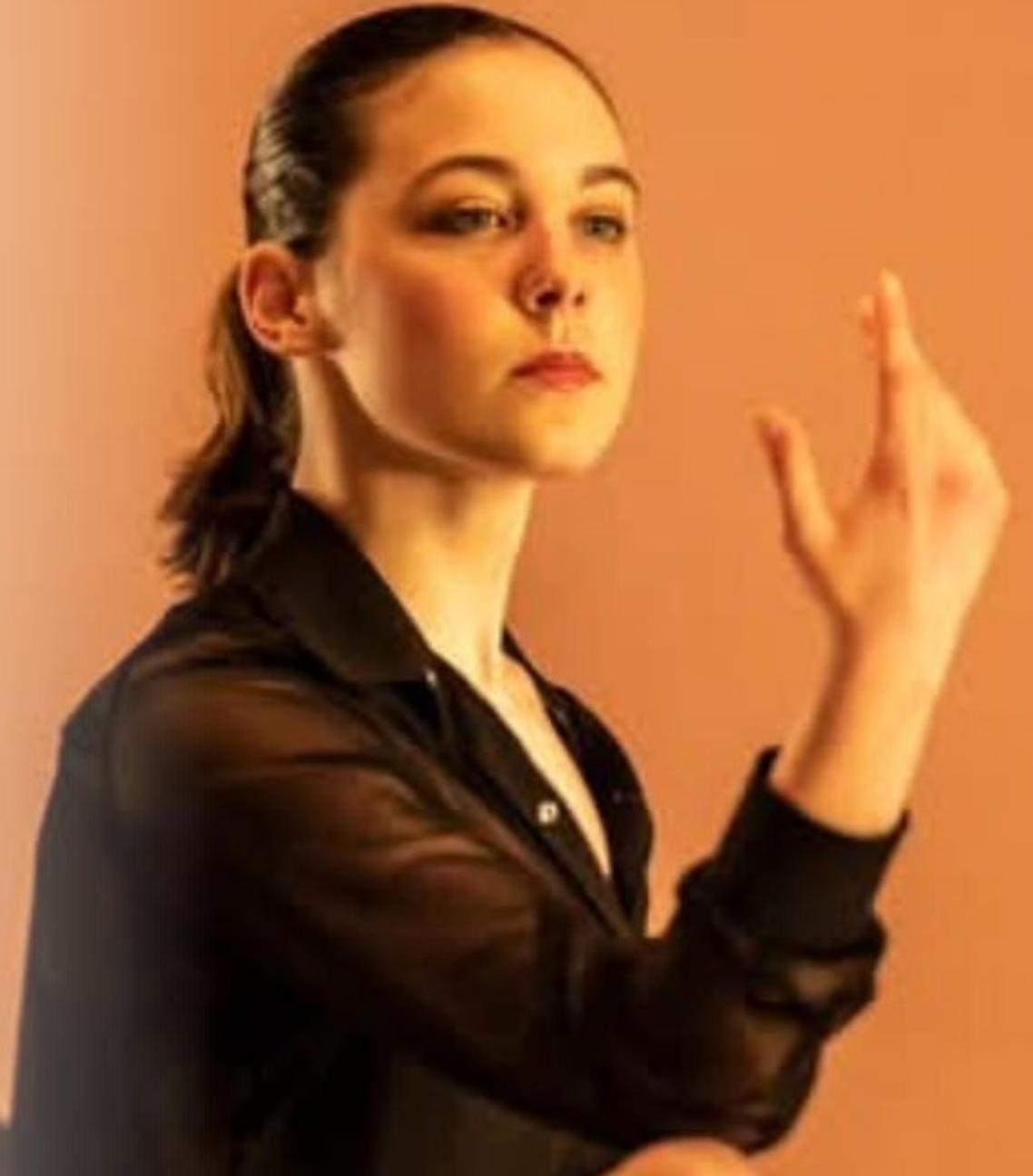
How much funding might be available for grants each year, on a “gradual spend-down” plan?

Four-Year Budget Model Input:

- Target a final balance of \$500k in 2029, per City Finance guidance
- Assume carry-forward balance of \$3.5m into 2026
- Assume CAT revenues will remain flat at \$3.1m/year
- Increase funding for Public School programs each year
- Increase funding for Capacity Building each year
- Hold administrative costs at 10% of annual CAT revenue
- Allocate the rest of the funding for grant awards to cultural organizations.

Outcome:

- Inspire Olympia could allocate up to \$3m for Comprehensive and Impact awards each year through 2029.
- To stay within budget, CAAB will review and adjust this target amount each year, prior to recommending grant awards to City Council.



Cultural Access Fund		Projection			
2025 Program Budget		2026	2027	2028	2029
Roll forward prev. CAF revenues less expenses	\$3,750,000	\$3,594,101	\$ 2,979,101	\$ 2,261,101	\$ 1,381,101
2025 CAF Projected Revenue	\$3,100,000	\$3,100,000	\$ 3,100,000	\$ 3,100,000	\$ 3,100,000
<i>Total Revenue</i>	\$6,850,000	\$6,694,101	\$ 6,079,101	\$ 5,361,101	\$ 4,481,101
Comprehensive Contracts (year two of 2-yr con	\$1,220,899	\$2,945,000	\$ 3,038,000	\$ 3,100,000	\$ 3,100,000
Impact Contracts	\$1,300,000				
Cultural Access in Public Schools (CAPS)	\$ 375,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
Workshops & learning opportunities for funded	\$ 50,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000
2025 Program Administration	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 310,000
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$3,255,899	\$3,715,000	\$ 3,818,000	\$ 3,980,000	\$ 3,980,000
<i>CAF ending balance</i>	\$3,594,101	\$2,979,101	\$ 2,261,101	\$ 1,381,101	\$ 501,101
2025 CAPS Program Budget					
Transportation Reimbursement to OSD	\$ 90,000				
Field Trip Reimbursements	\$ 155,000				
FT CAPS Coordinator	\$ 130,000				
Total:	\$ 375,000				

2024-2026 Granting Structure

Comprehensive Funding:

Two-year contracts that may fund up to 15% of an organization's budget, to a maximum of \$75k/yr

Requirements:

- Registered nonprofit
- 2-year history of public programming
- Offer programs year-round

Impact Funding:

One-year contracts offering funding of \$3k to \$30k

Requirements:

- Registered nonprofit or Fiscally Sponsored organization
- Offer at least one public program/yr
- Provide 1:1 match for requested funds

2026-2028 Granting Structure

Comprehensive Funding:

Two-year contracts that may fund up to **20%** of an organization's budget, to a maximum of **\$85k/yr**

Requirements:

- Registered nonprofit
- 2-year history of public programming
- Offer programs year-round
- **Offer Youth Programming**

Impact Funding:

One-year contracts offering funding of **\$5k** to **\$50k**

Requirements:

- Registered nonprofit or Fiscally Sponsored organization
- Offer at least one public program/yr
- Provide 1:1 match for requested funds



and LTAC

Community Livability and Public Safety Committee

July 23, 2025

Common Awardees in 2025

Organization	Inspire	LTAC	total
Arbutus	\$ 48,424	\$ 17,500	\$ 65,924
Funk Fest/Olympia Jazz Central	\$ 7,500	\$ 65,000	\$ 72,500
Hands On Childrens Musem	\$ 75,000	\$ 87,908	\$ 162,908
Harbor Days/SSMHA	\$ 22,500	\$100,000	\$ 122,500
Harlequin Productions	\$ 75,000	\$ 48,750	\$ 123,750
Olympia Symphony Orchestra	\$ 69,039	\$ 22,500	\$ 91,539
Team Tomorrow (South Sound Block Party)	\$ 22,500	\$ 75,000	\$ 97,500
Puget Sound Estuarium	\$ 75,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 120,000
Olympia Community Sailing	\$ 48,300	\$ 7,559	\$ 55,859
	\$ 443,263	\$469,217	\$ 912,480

Inspire Olympia	Lodging Tax Funding
Authority and Use of Funds	
<p>RCW 36.160</p> <p>Funds distributed to cultural organizations may be used to support cultural and educational activities, programs, and initiatives; public benefits and communications; and basic operations. Funds may also be used for (a) Capital expenditures or acquisitions, and (b) technology, equipment, and supplies</p>	<p>RCW 67.28.1816</p> <p>Lodging tax revenues may be used for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism marketing • Marketing and operations of special events and festivals designed to attract tourists from 50+ miles away • Operations and capital expenditures of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or a public facility district • Operations of tourism-related facilities owned or operated by nonprofit organizations (not capital expenditures)
Funding Amount and Cycle	
<p>Estimated 2025 revenue for competitive grants: \$2.65m</p> <p>Awards amounts of \$3000 to \$75,000 per year</p> <p>July - June</p>	<p>Estimated 2025 revenue for competitive grants: \$675k</p> <p>Unrestricted award amount</p> <p>January - December</p>

Program Funding Goals

- Support public programs in arts, culture, heritage, and science.
- Reduce barriers and enhance participation, especially for historically underserved populations.
- Support minority cultural programs by and for culturally or ethnically specific communities and or underrepresented groups.
- Expand access to youth education programs in arts, culture, heritage, and science.
- Enhance sustainability and collaboration within and among cultural sector organizations.

Priority will be given to tourism activities that:

- Show potential to result in overnight stays by tourists in lodging establishments within the City.
- Promote Olympia and/or events, activities, and places in the city to potential tourists outside Thurston County.
- Show potential to result in economic benefit to Olympia.
- Minimize duplication of services and encourage cooperative marketing and partnerships.
- Provide, maintain, operate, or enhance City-owned tourism facilities or infrastructure.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants must meet all four criteria:

- Registered Non-Profit or fiscally sponsored org
- Mission-focused in art, culture, heritage, science
- Located in City of Olympia, or majority of programming is in the city, or primarily serves Olympia residents or Olympia Public Schools
- Provides public programming

Applicants may be any of these:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Fiscally sponsored groups
- Municipalities
- Businesses

Advisory Board per RCW

Membership must include citizen representatives of constituencies and organizations with interests relevant to the work of the program including, but not limited to, leaders in the business, educational, and cultural communities. Advisory council members should be residents of the county creating the program.

At least five members, to include: (a) At least two representatives of businesses required to collect Lodging Tax; and (b) at least two members who are involved in activities funded by Lodging Tax revenue. One member shall be an elected official of the municipality who shall serve as chair of the committee.

Review Criteria

Applicants are evaluated based on the degree to which they address a range of standards listed from minimum to most successful, in the areas of:

- Programming Merit and Value
 - Youth Education Programs, if offered
 - Community Engagement and Impact
 - Equity and Access
 - Capacity and Feasibility (Impact Applicants)
- OR
- Management and Operations (Comprehensive Applicants)

1. Project or event plan is clear, and the proposal reflects enough detail to effectively determine the potential to result in overnight stays by tourists in lodging establishments within the City. (20 pts.)
 2. Project demonstrates potential for overnight stays. (Room nights: Over 200 = 20 pts., 100-200 = 15 pts., 50-100=10 pts., less than 50 = 5 pts.)
 3. Proposal demonstrates the organization is working in partnership with fellow organizations and businesses. (15 pts.)
 4. Project has clear marketing goals and defined promotion plan for marketing outside Thurston County. (20 pts.)
 5. Project complements other events in the community and helps create a diversity of opportunities (arts, culture, recreation, education, or historic significance). (10 pts.)
 6. Event proposal defines additional revenue benefits beyond overnight stays (likely diners, shoppers, paid parking etc.). (10 pts.)
 7. Project occurs in non-demand periods or shoulder season. (5 pts.)
- Innovation Bonus: (5 pts. ea) Shows growth or adaptation over use of a previous award; or Presents an unusual approach or exciting new direction.

Common Administrative Support Systems

A single City granting platform

The City uses “Submittable” to support applicants and manage the evaluation processes for Inspire, LTAC and Neighborhood Grants. This is a common industry software platform for grant administration.

- Similar to the city’s Permit Portal (Smartgov), Submittable acts as a portal where users can submit and track their applications, view past applications, submit reports, and message staff.
- City staff can view draft submissions - this is helpful for customer support.
- Applicants can manage multiple applications for multiple funders if they also use the platform.
- Reviewers evaluate, score, and offer comments in the program, eliminating wasteful printing.
- Reviewers can see the application and the review form on the same screen.
- Includes reporting and data management tools for administrators.

Common Supporting Resources

- Published Guidelines clearly explain the rules for applicants, the funding process, and requirements for funded organizations.
- Staff do not score applications or make funding recommendations, allowing them to provide unbiased support for applicants.
- Staff can review drafts and suggest ways to strengthen and align proposals to program funding goals.
- Applicants can request 1:1 time with staff until the day before applications close.
- Regular Online informational sessions are recorded and posted to city webpages.
- Staffing cross-overs support consistency: Economic Development Director, Senior Program Specialist, Administrative Support for contracting and payments.