City of Olympia

Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on Cultural Access

Implementing Olympia's Cultural Access Program

3-28-2023

23-11-001

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Introduction

Olympia voters approved a ballot initiative in April 2022 authorizing a new sales tax for the purpose of creating a Cultural Access program for Olympia residents. By August, City Council adopted new ordinances to authorize the sales tax increase and establish a Cultural Access Fund for the new dedicated revenue; and in September added an ordinance establishing a Cultural Access Advisory Board (CAAB) representative of Olympia residents and populations to be served by the new program, to advise City Council. Recruitment for the CAAB would begin in the fall and newly appointed citizen members seated in April 2023.

In the interim, with the Cultural Access Tax set to take effect on January 1, 2023, Council created the Ad Hoc Committee for Cultural Access that could begin right away to develop recommendations for formation of the new program while undertaking a thorough recruitment process for the inaugural CAAB.

Per Olympia City Council Resolution, the Ad Hoc Committee is established to:

- Develop recommendations for consideration by the future Cultural Access Program Advisory Board.
- Address technical elements of the new program framework in advance, developing a set of operational recommendations that will allow the permanent Advisory Board to begin work in 2023.
- Engage in strategic planning on program values and objectives, develop recommendations for fundamental program elements and offer strategies to tailor these program elements to Olympia's cultural nonprofit organizations and the needs of the Olympia community.

The Committee is composed of seven citizen members experienced in community granting programs, with a diversity of professional and lived experience.

Committee Members:

Paul Knox	Janece Levien	Jean Mandeberg
Tamar Krames	Mariella Luz	Anjali (Angela) Silva
Lee Lyttle		

Committee Staff and Consultant Support:

Marygrace Goddu, *Inspire Olympia* Program Manager
Amelia Layton, *Inspire Olympia* Program Specialist
ArtsWA (Washington State Arts Commission), with special thanks to Britt Madsen, Program Specialist, Grants to Organizations

The following supporting documents referenced in this section can be found in the Appendix:

A. Chapter 36.160 RCW: Cultural Organizations
B. Olympia City Council Resolution M-2280 submitting Cultural Access Ballot Proposition to voters
C. Olympia City Council Resolution M-2382 appointing Ad Hoc Committee
D. Olympia Municipal Code 3.04.200, Special Revenue Funds
E. Olympia Municipal Code 2.100.700-710, Article XI. Cultural Access Program Advisory Board

Committee Process

The Committee met twice monthly from November 2022 through March 2023 for a total of ten meetings. The Committee followed the Open Public Meetings Act, though not strictly subject to those requirements.

Ad Hoc Committee | **Process**

Set the Framework	Plan and Set Priorities	Dig In	Deliver Recommendations
Orientation ▪ Committee Role, Process and Resources ▪ Meeting schedule ▪ Workplan & Goals **Cultural Access 101** ▪ Authorizing framework ▪ Required program Elements **Discovery** ▪ Data and information	**Identify topics for exploration and discussion** ▪ Build list from authorizing framework ▪ Study Tacoma example **Identify information/data needs** ▪ Subject Matter Experts for discussion as needed ▪ Draft community survey	Explore issue areas in depth Launch Survey of ACHS nonprofits Integrate survey data Formulate approaches including CAPS Develop and frame draft recommendations	Finalize Recommendations Deliver to City Council/CLPS committee Report to Cultural Access Advisory Board
Meetings 1-2	**Meetings 3-4**	**Meetings 5-9**	**Meeting 10**
Nov 2022	**Dec 2022**	**Jan – Mar 2023**	**Mar - April 2023**

All meetings were publicly noticed with access for the public to listen in remotely or in person. Committee recommendations were reached through discussion and deliberation and approved by consensus.

The committee's first four meetings featured Orientation, Discovery, and Visioning.

The discovery stage reviewed available data on the Olympia community including the *2022 Statistical Profile for Olympia* from Thurston Regional Planning (www.trpc.org/theprofile), data from the Olympia School District, data and information from the City's Olympia Strong survey work from summer 2022, data from the City's November 2021 Arts, Cultures, Sciences and Heritage Survey of Olympia residents, and survey responses from the 2022 Creative District Survey.

 The intent of this discovery was to examine the needs and desires of the Olympia community and begin to consider how cultural access in Olympia can be shaped to reflect and respond.

Take-aways from Discovery

There are clear opportunities for Olympia's cultural access program to:

- Strengthen voice, presence, visibility and belonging for Olympia's Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and other systemically marginalized groups;

- Serve identified low-income populations that corelate with the school district's highest rates of Free and Reduced Lunch Program participation;

- Reflect the community's priority for youth education especially through the public schools, which provide a platform for equitable access;

- Support workforce development;

- Increase intersectionality, collaboration, and sense of community among Cultural Organizations; and

- Support intergenerational engagement.

The Committee also conducted a survey of Olympia nonprofit cultural sector organizations to help them understand the size, shape, and mission of local organizations, who they serve, how demographics and equity considerations figure into their work, and their short and long-term needs and goals.

The survey was sent to 142 organizations using contact lists developed from arts and culture-related city outreach in 2021 on Armory and Cultural Access topics, and information about local registered nonprofit organizations obtained from the Secretary of State. The 29-question survey was live from January 19 to February 17 and received 63 responses.
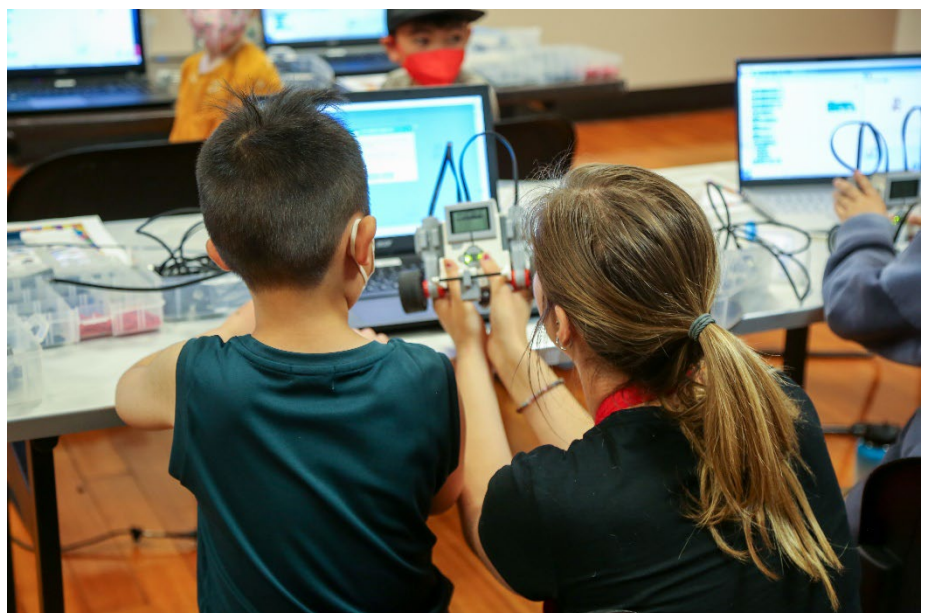
Take-aways from the Survey

- **We need to work hard to reach out to new organizations.**
  - 71% of respondents have been in operation for 10+ years. There may be many younger organizations out there that we did not reach, were not on mailing list, or didn't respond.

- **There is opportunity to help our small organizations grow**.
  - 46% of respondents have budgets of less than $50k. This indicates an opportunity for a higher proportion of outgoing grants to organizations in this size range, especially given that smaller organizations may be underrepresented in the survey.

- **We need to support and multiply the number of organizations by and for minority racial, ethnic, and social identity groups.**
  - While the data is not scientific there is evidence that minority racial and ethnic groups are underrepresented among survey respondents, and underrepresented among those who are served by our existing Cultural Organizations.

- **We need to actively encourage participation by culture, heritage and science organizations.**
  - These disciplines seem under-represented among respondents; but it was also noted that there are more small science-based organizations than anticipated.

- **There is a clear need to focus on general operational support for at least the first year.**
  - Organizations expressed immediate need for human resources – staff and contractors. Close behind were rent, added space, professional development, materials/supplies.
  - Long-term goals also point to operating support as a high priority.
    - Organizations most often expressed hopes for adding/expanding programming.

Important Terms

"Cultural Organizations" as used in this report specifically refers to those organizations who meet the definition provided in the enabling statue (RCW 36.160.020). In summary, these are Washington State registered nonprofits whose primary mission is the advancement or preservation of the arts, sciences, heritage or culture, and who provide programming for the public.

"Cultural Sector" as used in this report has a broader meaning than "Cultural Organizations" and is used to refer to the many individuals, businesses, nonprofits and agencies that contribute to our creative economy and the creative character of our community.

The Ad Hoc Committee further defined a list of terms to clarify language used in this report and in future discussions by the CAAB and in program guidelines. That list can be found in the appendix.

Framework for Committee Recommendations

Legal requirements of the program set the essential topics for Ad Hoc Committee recommendations, including State statute, City Council Resolution, ballot initiative language, and the subsequent additions to City municipal code. The Committee worked to address these essential components of the program while shaping a program to the needs of the Olympia community. This report shares their recommendations toward these ends.

The following supporting documents referenced in this section can be found in the Appendix:
   F.   Survey Questions
   G.   Data Trends from January Survey of Local Cultural Organizations
   H.   Ad Hoc Committee Recommended Terms and Definitions
   I.   Legal Compliance Checklist

A Message from the Ad Hoc Committee

The Ad Hoc Committee respectfully offers the recommendations in this report to the incoming Cultural Access Advisory Board and to the Olympia City Council for consideration. Our seven-member committee gathered from November 2022 through March 2023 to dream, share, question, explore, reflect, and to formulate these recommendations on the administration and operation of the Inspire Olympia Cultural Access Program.

In considering the work ahead to implement this program, two themes stood out in our discussions.

- *A two-fold focus on equity, to 1). ensure that organizations make equity a priority in their publicly-funded work, to reach, serve, include and support those historically or systemically excluded; and 2. to model equity in Olympia's cultural access program administration, following the city's commitment to practices that reduce inequities and earn trust through transparency and accountability.*

- *To establish a simple and clear program that can grow and evolve as our community's Cultural Organizations do, build trust, and lower barriers. This means beginning with a focused, core granting structure, with plans to evolve each year. It means doing less and doing it very well, at the beginning.*

These themes are apparent, and repeated, in our recommendations.

We thank the City of Olympia for this opportunity to play a role in the early implementation of this ground-breaking, culture-shifting initiative. We are confident that this work will build on our community's strengths and truly inspire Olympia's culture of creativity, belonging, learning and expression.

Cultural Access Ad Hoc Committee, March 21, 2023

Program Mission and Goals

Mission Statement

"Inspire Olympia supports a culture of creativity, belonging, learning and expression."

Program Goals

- Promote equity;
- Strengthen and grow Olympia's cultural sector: Arts, Culture, Heritage and Sciences; and
- Support youth, learning, and educators.

This mission statement is a starting point, that can and should evolve with the program. Promoting equity is intentionally placed at the head of the list of recommended program goals and is understood as integral to the additional goals of strengthening, growing, and serving everyone in the community especially our youth.

The Committee formulated this mission statement and program goals by first imagining the future of Olympia after seven years of cultural access investment and the many public benefits of a successful program. They brought their visioning together with the demographics and other data shared in Meeting 2, and they discussed the community impact they wish to see.

These additional priorities support the program goals and should be supported and encouraged through the program's granting guidelines and criteria:

- Support and encourage new and emerging organizations and programs, especially those by and for Olympia's Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and other systemically marginalized groups.
- Support collaborative work among Cultural Organizations, especially interdisciplinary partnering
- Focus on PreK through Grade 5 in public school cultural access programming to address an identified gap in enrichment opportunities and funding for this public-school age group.
- Support fair compensation for the work of artists, culture bearers and environmental educators.

"We want to convey to organizations to think differently about their work. We don't want more of the same. This is a new era, with new funding, and they should reach out to those they haven't worked with before."

Jean Mandeberg, meeting #9

Strategies for Promoting Equity

To Embrace a Commitment to Equity:

- Model equity in the granting process with clear funding options and a simple, standard application. Set reasonable eligibility thresholds and direct ineligible groups to additional pathways through partnerships, fiscal sponsors, and resources to help them build toward eligibility.

- Keep contract and reporting requirements simple. Offer helpful templates for program planning, budgeting and reporting.

- Cultural Access in Public Schools (CAPS) should begin with a focus on PreK - Grade 5, where public schools do not offer "enrichment" classes and the need is greatest, and on field trips and in-school programs. Our youngest students are arguably the most impacted by pandemic-era remote learning, and most in need of additional pathways for socio-emotional learning and expression.

- Identify equity goals for the City's program administration each year and be transparent and accountable to them.

- Regularly perform gap analyses to identify and address disparities.
    - Review data on the outcome of Year One and Year Two funding cycles with a focus on equity and inclusion and set benchmarks for improvement.
    - Utilize data from the Olympia School District to identify and monitor gaps that could be addressed through CAPS.
    - Build relationships with Principals and teachers to understand unique groups or specialized needs.

Achieving greater equity and access lies at the heart of Cultural Access. The program will need to develop clear statements about how these principles are understood, how they will be applied, and how they will be measured.

Equity should be advanced at different levels of the program to better serve Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and other systemically marginalized groups.

Through the work of funded programs:

Support cultural organizations representing marginalized groups in the cultural sector; and support programming that
- empowers people from marginalized groups to participate in the cultural sector;
- takes active steps to include marginalized groups in programming; and

- promotes a culture of respect, inclusion, and understanding of people of all backgrounds.

Through the grant application and award process:

Encourage organizations to think about how they engage and serve various populations.

Encourage them to collect demographic data, set baselines, pursue goals for greater outreach and inclusion, and involve these populations in program planning; and

Encourage organizations to diversify their own staffing, volunteers, and boards.

Through the City's administration of the program:

'Walk the talk.' Adhere to the city's Social Justice & Equity Commitment in Action, taking actions that eliminate discrimination, create equitable opportunities, improve diversity among City staff, and build trust through accountability and transparency.

Establish baselines and set goals for program outreach to underserved groups, thoughtfully collect demographic information to support these efforts, and align cultural access with the City's broader equity and social justice commitments, goals, and assessments.

Design forms, applications, and processes that are broadly accessible; and

Set expectations in the program guidelines, application, and evaluation process for the work of Olympia's publicly-funded cultural access programs to advance equity by countering racism and other social biases in our community.

"Life is more harmonious when we recognize, learn about, and give dignity and respect to "the other." We build circular relationships and community when we participate in diversity, equity, and inclusion."
Anjali Silva, meeting #3

See Appendix J, City of Olympia *Social Justice & Equity Commitment in Action*.

Defining "Public Benefit"

Link Public Benefit Directly to Program Mission and Goals:

"Public benefit" is to be defined and evaluated in light of the contribution that any proposed action or activity makes to the goals of the program. Program Guidelines should feature a list that includes local examples where possible.

The Committee developed a list of examples of public benefits they hope to see from the investment of cultural access funds in the community. Alignment with the three primary program goals should serve as baseline standard for evaluating the public benefit achieved through any use of cultural access funds. The value and importance of this alignment can be emphasized in program instructions and guidelines for applicants and in weighted criteria to evaluate proposals.

Public benefit will come in many forms, some more visible to the public than others. Some examples of activities and programs that can provide measurable public benefit include but are not limited to,

- Activities that strengthen programs for the public:
    - Programs and activities in Olympia Public Schools emphasizing hands-on experiences, opportunities for self-expression, and interdisciplinary learning;
    - Classes, events, and activities for vulnerable groups including disabled and neuro-divergent; and centering minority groups including LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, and Native Americans;
    - Community engagement involving those who will be served in designing and planning events and programs.
    - Increasing the public visibility of programs and visibly sharing creative processes, in addition to products.
- Actions that strengthen and enhance Cultural Organizations:
    - Compensating creatives and subject matter experts fairly for their work.
    - New internships and mentoring programs especially for youth to experience creative career pathways.
    - Increasing the diversity of staff, volunteers, and governing boards; DEI training for board members, staff and volunteers.
    - Hiring additional staff and providing training and enrichment
- Physical improvements and equipment:
    - Improving facilities and expand or open new physical spaces
   - Addressing technology and equipment needs for accessible, high-quality program delivery

See Appendix K., Ad Hoc Committee *Public Benefit Working Document*.

Strategies for Achieving and Demonstrating Public Benefit

To Achieve Public Benefit Outcomes:

- Identify underserved groups and direct funding resources there.

- Offer funding pathways that reflect the core goals of the program.

- Require that all grant applicants complete a two-year plan, with goals. Use this plan as the basis of the application for the second-year grant and to review, evaluate, and capture data on program delivery and effectiveness.

- Follow a continuous improvement model, and regularly measure and refine the program to align with program goals.
  - Examine outcomes for service locations and demographic groups; balance among arts, culture, heritage and science organizations; size of participating organizations, effective equity measures, collaborative and interdisciplinary partnerships, for example.

- Design the process to collect data throughout -- from application to final report.

Aspirations   **Actions**

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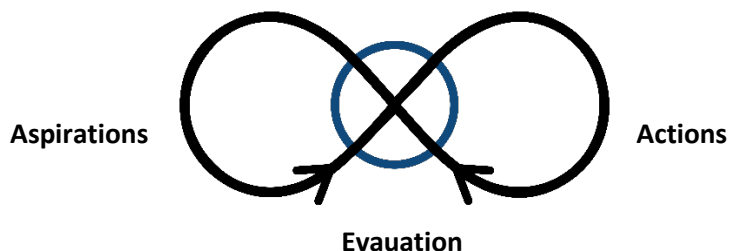
A continuous improvement model (shown here) was discussed by the committee as a way to visualize program implementation and evaluation. Cycling on the left are the mission, goals and aspirations of the program. These values inform the cycle on the right side, which is the work of Cultural Organizations in the community. At the center they intersect and align within the blue circle, which encompasses the program's administrative tools and lenses: guidelines, application, granting pathways, review and evaluative processes.

The blue circle represents the work of program staff, CAAB, and City Council to coordinate and refine the program. This center point should serve to utilize the most current wisdom from both sides to keep aspirations and actions focused and synchronized, and continually adjust near-term and long-range views, like a set of binoculars.

"This program shouldn't stand apart on its own. Link it to topics we care about and contribute to problem-solving through creative arts: economy, schools, people experiencing homelessness."

Lee Lyttle, meeting #2

To Support Cultural Organizations:

- Conduct outreach via workshops, webinars, training opportunities, and "office hours" to orient and guide applicants.

- Encourage Fiscal Sponsorship to simplify, facilitate and encourage this type of partnership.

- Offer an early first grant payment.
  - A signed contract is considered the first deliverable and triggers first opportunity for grantee to invoice for payment. This acknowledges the planning and organizational work of the application process.

- Make reporting requirements and corrective action plans reasonable, simple, data-based, and share them up front.

- Focus on building connections and relationships among Cultural Organizations through matchmaking, to encourage partnerships, mentoring, and cross-disciplinary collaboration.
  - Connect established and emerging organizations, especially for CAPS.
  - Offer specialized guidance for CAPS applicants.

These measures will help organizations achieve outcomes and leverage the public benefit of their work.

Fiscal Sponsorship provides an entry point for small organizations seeking to test-drive their mission, services, and fundraising capability.

Fiscal Sponsorship is a fee-based contractual relationship in which an established nonprofit organization offers their legal and tax-exempt status to an unincorporated group with a related mission. It includes fiduciary oversight, financial management, and may include a degree of administrative support, and allows the sponsored group to receive grants and tax-exempt donations. The sponsored organization retains its programmatic autonomy and a separate advisory board.

There are regional and state-wide organizations who can serve as Fiscal Sponsors, but it would be ideal to have experienced nonprofit organizations in Olympia and Thurston County willing to sponsor smaller organizations so that the expertise, the relationships, and the public investment stay close to home.

Eligibility

Keep it Local:

Limit program eligibility to organizations who conduct a majority of their activities in the City of Olympia, or who primarily serve residents of Olympia or youth in the Olympia School District.

Expand Participation through Fiscal Sponsorship:

Enable participation by small and emerging organizations with a clear pathway to Fiscal Sponsorship. Work to cultivate local fiscal sponsors and develop a standard contract and process to encourage Fiscal Sponsors within the local and regional community.

Eligibility parameters are largely set by statute; however, the committee recommended adding a local focus by limiting eligibility to organizations that provide a "majority" of their public programming in Olympia, to ensure that the program's investments and benefits serve the local Olympia community. Because Olympia city boundaries encompass a relatively small geographic area, limiting eligibility to organizations within the city limits was decided against as too restrictive. Opening eligibility to all of Thurston County was too expansive. Focusing on where an organization does most of its work was deemed the most reasonable solution and resulted in this recommendation.

The committee discussed strategies to increase program inclusion and equity through support to existing or new groups who may lack nonprofit 501c3 status. Fiscal Sponsorship was identified as an essential method as discussed above.

Granting Structure

Overarching Goals for Grant Structure:

- Plan to evolve along with the evolution and growth of local Cultural Organizations.

- Offer reliable multi-year funding with a simple reporting structure.

- Keep the mechanics of application, contracts, and reporting processes as clear and simple as possible to facilitate equitable participation.

- Engage in ongoing communications with PreK-12 educators to ensure CAPS program aligns with school priorities, capacity, and requirements.

- Build the capacity of funded organizations to collect demographic data that will help to measure progress toward equity and access goals.

Program structure recommendations to achieve these goals follow below.

Granting Cycle:

Use a two-year granting cycle, July 1 – June 30, with annual funding awards.

The committee envisions a multi-year approach to granting that awards funding annually but asks for longer-range (2-year) planning within the application process. The applicant organization's two year plan can then serve as a tracking tool for progress through the initial grant award cycle and a ready basis for a simplified application for those continuing into a second cycle.

A multi-year cycle for granting will:
- Provide financial stability for organizations with a reliable funding source;
- Streamline the application process in the second year by making it primarily an update and progress report on their multi-year plan;
- Support program goals to strengthen and grow Olympia's Cultural sector, with reliable funding;
- Allow program staff to focus on incoming cohort of new applicants each year; and
- Align well with the school year.

Grant Types:

Offer two funding options in Year One: General Operating Support, and Cultural Access Programs in Schools (CAPS). Eligible organizations may apply for both.

Beginning in Year Two add a third option for Project Grants and consider expanding CAPS.

Year One:

- **General Operating Support Grants.** These are unrestricted funds, available as a core program feature every year, intended to support an organization's mission and current or ongoing programs, events, and projects.

- **Cultural Access Programs in Schools (CAPS) Grants.** As a first-year pilot offer a limited set of program types that organizations can propose for in-school activities in the Olympia School District, to build and test a system supportive of teachers and learners and establish the level of administrative support needed for planning and coordination.

Year Two:

- **Add Project Grants.** Direct public funds toward the production of new projects or events, which can be a single event, like a festival or a series of related events or performances for the public.
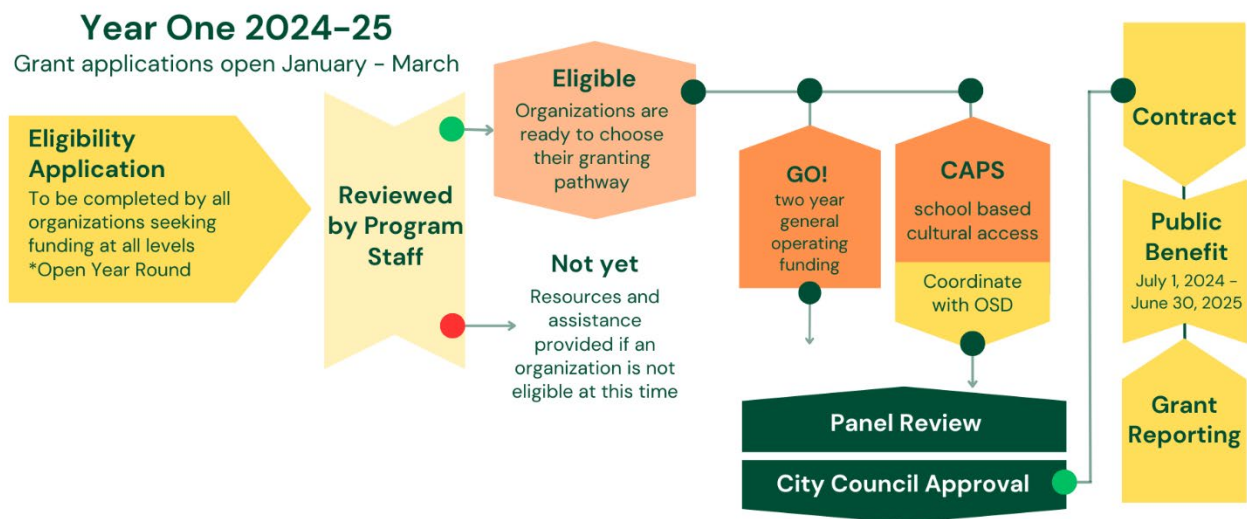
With the goal of keeping the mechanics as clear and simple as possible to facilitate participation, the committee resolved around these three granting pathways to first strengthen, and then grow local Cultural Organizations.

Grants for General Operating Support respond to a central program goal to provide a reliable source of funding for local organizations. In the initial granting cycles operating support will help stabilize and strengthen local Cultural Organizations so they can prepare to deepen, extend, and expand their public programming, with Project Support Grants available later to expand services if they choose.

Grants for Cultural Access Programming in Public Schools (CAPS): Cultural Organizations can propose field trips and projects on topics aligned to Olympia School District academic learning objectives in:

- Literary, Visual or Media Arts
- Performing Arts
- STEM or STEAM
- Folk or Traditional Arts
- *"Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State"* or another tribal-developed curriculum
- Local history or place-based curriculum

Detailed recommendations for CAPS follow below.

"We want to create an equitable, transparent process…(with) pathways and criteria that are publicly transparent. Remove the veil of mystery and sense that it's "who you know" that is perhaps characteristic small-town insularity."
Tamar Krames, meeting #3

The committee's goal of creating a program that can evolve as it supports the growth of Olympia's Cultural Organizations directly influenced the development of a simplified initial grant structure and a stepped approach to program implementation. The Committee emphasized the importance of not taking on too much, and getting it right before taking on more, to build trust as the applicant community builds capacity.

Cultural Access in Public School (CAPS):

- Identify a *minimum* funding goal for CAPS in Year One granting cycle(s) until a track record is available to help set appropriate funding levels for subsequent cycles.

- Limit Year One options to allow for thorough and careful program development and establish supportive relationships with schools.
  - Focus on offering PreK to grade 5, in-school, on-site programs and field trips during the school day for all grades.

- o In the first year, only Cultural Organizations with a track record of working in OSD schools may propose in-class programs.
  - o All Cultural Organizations may propose off-site Field Trips or single in-school events such as a performance, assembly or school-based project, exhibit, or pop-up gallery.

- In Year Two and beyond, expand to include options for before and after school, professional development and curriculum development, and programming for upper grades.

- Encourage Cultural Organizations who are new to CAPS to partner with those who are experienced in delivering in-school programs.

- Allow organizations new to CAPS to propose in-school programs once the full administrative requirements of planning and coordination are better understood and supported.

- Develop and support a process that includes early communication with OSD representatives to vet ideas and inform program proposals.

The committee felt strongly that CAPS should be included in the first cycle of funding as a critical equity strategy and as a response to the public's expressed desire to serve youth with hands-on experiential learning in arts, science, heritage and culture. However, high quality in-school programs require additional layers of planning and coordination to reach appropriate ages and grade levels and to align with academic learning objectives, and will impose additional requirements for applicants working in the school setting. Getting started soon is important, but starting with a limited focus will allow for the program and the School District to work together to develop supporting administrative roles and processes.

Setting a minimum allocation ("not less than") for CAPS in the first year will meet a statutory requirement to identify a percentage of total funds reserved annually to for public schools cultural programming, while allowing additional funds to be allocated if merited. Goals can be set for increased and expanded CAPS programming in future funding cycles, as experience and capacity grow within the cultural community.

Coordination and Support for CAPS:

Utilize the Year One CAPS Pilot to assess the level of coordination needed among Cultural Organizations, Olympia public schools, and Olympia's Cultural Access Program. Consider increasing the funding reserved annually for CAPS to support a partial or a full time CAPS coordinator or liaison position.

The committee discussed the importance of getting cultural access into the schools and the grade levels that currently offer the fewest opportunities for enrichment classes. They also placed high priority on ensuring that the program supports teachers by doing as much as possible to simplify the necessary planning and coordination for CAPS activities and avoid creating additional burdens for them.

These goals necessitate careful communication with the School District as well as individual schools and principals. There is administrative workload associated with reviewing and evaluating program proposals and attuning them to individual grades, schools, or teachers, and with the logistics of background checks and volunteer training protocols for adults in the school setting who are not school district employees.

The Committee saw the CAPS Pilot year as study year, an opportunity to clearly define this workload and determine where it is best placed, before allotting funding for a CAPS coordinating role. Future solutions may include a division of responsibilities between the district and the City or seeking a third party to facilitate and coordinate this work.

Use of Transportation Funds:

- Set aside funding for Transportation in initial grant cycles based on projected transportation needs for CAPS and non-CAPS programs. Give high priority to funding field trips during the school day.

Transportation funding, established by City resolution as "up to 10%" of annual fund, is expected to be sufficient to cover program proposals. The committee expressed a priority in support of field trips for CAPS programs.

Strategies for Evaluation and Review

For Evaluation and Review of Applications:

- The Cultural Access Advisory Board (CAAB) should serve as review panel to evaluate and recommend grant award recipients and amounts for approval by City Council.

- The Board may add citizen panelists to expand areas of expertise, perspectives, or disciplines represented on the panel. For review of CAPS proposals, these may include the voices of educators, youth leaders, and families.

- Be observant of possible conflict-of-interests among panelists. Address this with signed conflict-of-interest statements and require recusals to avoid any appearance of bias in scoring.

- Evaluate programs based on alignment with program goals.

- Support diversity, equity, and inclusion by weighting evaluation criteria to favor those organizations and program that seek to strengthen voice, presence, agency, visibility and belonging for Olympia's Black, Indigenous, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and other systemically marginalized groups;

- Support a variety of organizations, in size, disciplines, and service models; and encourage new and existing heritage and culture organizations, as an area that may be underrepresented.

Many granting organizations including Tacoma Creates utilize an annually selected panel of citizens to conduct grant reviews and recommend finalists to their Advisory Board, who reviews and forwards to City Council or other governing body for approval. This is an unnecessary step for Olympia, at least in the initial funding cycles. The Committee recommends that the CAAB serve as review panel, which will invest them deeply in applying the program guidelines, goals, and mission to the work of Cultural Organizations in the community. It also places them well to evaluate the growth and progress of funded organizations that return in future cycles, and to engage in continuous program refinement and improvement.

Recognizing that the CAAB may have representational gaps in any given cycle, the committee recommends adding panelists from the community at-large if needed. This is especially relevant for reviewing proposals for youth and school programs, where the insights of educators, learners, youth leaders and families are important to include.

Recognizing that Olympia's community is interconnected, the committee recommend developing a process for avoiding conflicts of interest and supporting recusals when there may be any appearance of bias.

Program Communications

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For Program Communication and Promotion:

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- Establish a strong visual brand and marketing plan for program identity and consistent presence in Olympia.

- Make the application language and process clear and understandable.

- Make program materials accessible via diverse delivery methods (in person, online, downloadable doc's, videos, office hours, workshops) and in additional languages.

- Encourage and support visibility of programs and activities funded by *Inspire Olympia* in the community. Provide grant recipients with marketing materials for consistent messaging about cultural access funding and support.

- Share, celebrate, and make the creative *process* visible, as well as the outcomes, and work to build audiences for creative and cultural endeavors in Olympia.

Outreach, listening, and sense of welcome are essential starting points for equitable outcomes and for creating belonging. For this reason alone, the committee emphasized that program communications and administrative format should be as simple and accessible as possible. Small organizations with few staff should feel as able and as viable in the grant application process as large organizations with grant-writing staff. The program can further this effort with visible and informative presence at community events of all sizes.

The committee recommended consistent marketing and messaging to create clarity and understanding for our community. This means that the recipient programs also participate by visibly and consistently crediting the cultural access program and the taxpayers for supporting their work.

> *"Cultural access can work to build a strong supporting community: audience building. Creative work is visible – the public can see artists and creatives working and see their process – and it is year-round, going on all the time."*
>
> **Jean Mandeberg, meeting #3**

Conclusion

This report offers a broad set of recommendations to the Cultural Access Advisory Board, a fundamental framework for program development, to be further shaped by the incoming Cultural Access Advisory Board.

These recommendations are offered as a foundation for the important work ahead, to build a program that can advance the hope and the promise for the residents of Olympia of a community truly inspired by equitable, ready access to the arts, sciences, heritage and culture.

Appendix

A. Chapter 36.160 RCW: Cultural Organizations
B. Council Resolution M-2280 authorizing Cultural Access Ballot Measure
C. Council Resolution M-2382 creating Ad Hoc Committee
D. OMC 3.04.200 establishing a Cultural Access Fund
E. OMC 2.100.700-710 establishing a Cultural Access Advisory Board
F. Survey Questions
G. Survey Response Data Trends
H. Ad Hoc Committee Recommended Terms & Definitions
I. Legal Compliance Checklist
J. Social Justice and Equity Commitment in Action
K. Public Benefit Working Document

To view all of these documents, visit the City website olympiawa.gov/culturalaccess.
Look for "documents" in right margin sidebar.