



INSPIRE WASHINGTON

Opening doors to science, heritage, and the arts.

2026 Legislative Session Cultural Agenda SUBJECT TO CHANGE – AS OF FEB 4, 2026

The Cultural Sector in Washington is a big tent. Therefore, the number of requests (spanning policy and budget requests) that have both indirect and direct impact on science, heritage, and arts programming is broad. It's our job to share all of these opportunities with you and to help you be strategic with your advocacy. This document shares the opportunities that Inspire WA believes will have the biggest impact on the broad sector AND needs the push from our whole coalition to achieve. They may also be of intersectional interest to our sector, like education, workforce development, and affordable housing, to name just a few.

How do you decide what to talk about when you have limited time with your lawmaker or their legislative aide? You will need to decide what matters most to your community and your cultural work. **We do not expect anyone to advocate for everything.** Each request has a specific proponent (like Inspire Washington, ArtsWA, WA State Historical Society, etc.) They are your advocacy partners and information specialists. Go to InspirationLeague.org/advocacy-resources for one-sheets on each bill or budget request.

Bill Key

PRO: Inspire WA is in support of this bill

OTHER: Inspire WA is interested, but would require an amendment to fully support the bill.

CON: Inspire WA is against this bill

CULTURAL SECTOR

Bill impacting the entire cultural sector:

- SB 6175 (Lovelett): Concerning ticket sales. **PRO**
- HB 1613 (Reeves): Concerning ticket sales **OTHER**
- HB 2194 (Parshley): Concerning sales and use tax for cultural access programs. **PRO**
- HB 2587 (Cortes) / SB 6245 (Wilson, C): Establishing a pilot program to advance funds to nonprofits to support grant performance. **PRO**

Bills related to ESSB 5814 and Sales Tax:

- HB 2257 (Berg) / SB 6113 (Frame): Concerning taxes administered by the department of revenue. **PRO/OTHER**
- HB 2121 (Walsh): Exempting nonprofits and schools from certain sales and use taxes on services. **OTHER**
- HB 2101 (Dufault): Exempting live presentations from retail sales and use tax. **OTHER**
- SB 5980 (Torres): Exempting live presentations from retail sales and use tax. **OTHER**

SCIENCE

Science budget requests

- Pacific Science Center's flagship outreach program, Science on Wheels, is the largest provider of hands-on science outreach education in Washington serving 48 of our 49 legislative districts. Support from the state provides Science on Wheels to low-income schools at a steep discount and helps keep the program accessible for all. Without State funding, approximately 52,000 students across Washington will go without this hands-on science education. *The ask: Please maintain \$400,000 in operating support for Science on Wheels in FY27.*

Science/Conservation bills

- SB 5965 (Bateman) / HB 2233 (Parshley) Reducing environmental impacts associated with bags provided to customers at retail establishments. **PRO**
- HB 2447 (Reeves) / SB 6108 (Frame): Designating the state shark. **PRO**
- SB 6272 (Lias): Concerning the design and operation of buildings to protect birds. **PRO**

HERITAGE

Washington State Historical Society

- *The ask: Maintain \$13.7M for the Washington State Historical Society in the Operating budget.*
- *The ask: Provide Accessibility improvements (\$375,000) and HVAC system repairs (\$780,000) for the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma in the Capital budget.*

Eastern Washington State Historical Society

- *The ask: Provide \$20,000 from the operating budget to maintain the Collections Management System.*
- *The ask: Provide \$110,000 from the operating budget to hire a Tribal Liaison staff member.*

WA Trust for Historic Preservation

- *The ask: Provide maintenance funding for Dept of Archeology and Historic Preservation in the operating budget.*

Heritage related bills

- HB 5950 (Cortes): Celebrating Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, and Vaisakhi. **PRO**
- HB 5134 (McCune): Requiring public schools to commemorate the contributions of Chinese Americans and Americans of Chinese descent. **PRO**
- HB 2525 (Mendoza): Establishing the heritage orchard program. **PRO**
- HB 1658 (Waters): Ensuring dedicated funding for history and heritage museums and county historic preservation programs. **PRO**
- HB 5574 (Nobles): Providing instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Latino American, and Black American history in public schools. **PRO**

HUMANITIES

Humanities WA

- **Prime Time Family Reading Program:** Prime Time Family Reading is a free family reading program for ages 6-10 delivered by Humanities WA in partnership with public libraries and local elementary schools.

The ask: Please provide \$500,000 to maintain the Prime Time Family Reading program from the Operating budget. (This was not funded in the Governor's FY27 budget)

ARTS

ArtsWA

- **Grant funding (*most important ask!*)**

The Governor's proposed budget reduces ArtsWA's grant funding by \$600,000, nearly one third of the program. This would significantly impact the level of support available for statewide creative programs and partnerships.

The ask: please maintain ArtsWA's grants budget and retain \$600,000 that was cut in the Governor's operating budget.

- **Creative Districts, Capital Request:** Sustain Creative Districts Capital Projects that make communities more livable, beautiful, and safe.

The ask: Provide \$384,000 from the capital budget to sustain Creative Districts Capital Projects. (This was not funded in the Governor's FY27 budget)

- **Creative Districts, Operating Request:** Sustain a proven program by maintaining operating funds that equitably support new and recertifying Creative Districts.

The ask: Provide \$30,000 from the operating budget to continue the Creative Districts program. (This was not funded in the Governor's FY27 budget)

- **CRM System:** Protect the Legislature's investment in ArtsWA's CRM system by funding routine technical support.

The ask: Maintain ArtsWA's CRM system with routine technical support by approving \$140,361 in the operating budget. (Fully funded in the Governor's FY27 budget)

- **Administrative & Operational Stability:** Maintain core operations by addressing rising costs, staffing changes, planning needs, and funding gaps.

The ask: Provide \$83,000 for administrative needs. from the operating budget. (Fully funded in the Governor's FY27 budget)

Arts bills

- HB 2363 (Reed): Concerning temporary exemptions from licensure for certain applicants for a license to practice music therapy. **PRO**
- HB 2579 (Stearns): Promoting and funding public media and digital equity. **PRO**

Are there other opportunities? Yes! We were strategic. We are monitoring an even larger list of issues and opportunities that would overwhelm you. Many of them have no political future while some are a guaranteed win. We are guiding you to the issues that need most attention. But the team at Inspire WA is always happy to talk about cultural policy. So, reach out to Manny or Jessi if you have a specific issue to discuss!