

Arts, Science and Heritage programs are essential to a healthy community and must be accessible to all.

The Problem: Inadequate and unequal access to Arts, Science, and Heritage experiences for our children, seniors, families, underserved and low-income communities.

Public support for the combination of arts and music education in the schools, hands-on scientific learning and appreciation of local history and culture in many areas is in serious decline. In fact, Washington State Arts Commission support, which increases access to and participation in arts and cultural opportunities throughout the state, has dropped from \$1.115 million in 2006 to \$440,000 in 2016. What used to be a universal part of the public school curriculum has been lost as budgets were cut. In a society that is increasingly focused on science, technology, engineering and math, it's even more vitally important for the health of our communities and our companies that the humanities maintain their place.

Inequality for children and families across Washington is growing, with too few children and families having access to the kinds of programs and learning that inspire creativity, develop imagination and open doors to a brighter future. Exposure to art and music education, museums, and science centers in our region is now too often determined by wealth or zip code. Opportunities for cultural participation and life-long learning should not be restricted to the privileged few.

Principals, Teachers and parent associations in many districts shoulder the unfair burden of providing what was—and should be— an integral part of every child's learning. Seniors and low income individuals should be able to participate and enjoy immersion in cultural programs and activities that refresh the human spirit. Simply put, arts, science and cultural heritage are essential programs that must be accessible for all.

Washington State can be a place where Arts, Heritage and Scientific opportunities are experienced by ALL.

The Solution: Approve and fund a cultural access program that expands access and improves equity

The King County Council will be asked to approve a cultural access program for King County and put it on the ballot for voter approval of a 1/10th of one percent sales tax increase to fund the program. This equates to an increased tax burden of about \$2/month for the average citizen and would not affect the purchases of basic necessities like food.

The measure, when approved by voters in August of 2017 will tear down the barriers that inhibit access and make arts and cultural participation equitable for all. The King County Cultural Access Plan will:

- Provide access for all through free or discounted price programs and performances
- Increase equitable access to those who face barriers due to geography, economic circumstance, disability, race or gender.
- Help increase programming that is relevant to the diverse communities in King County
- Provide a vibrant education in art, music, science, and heritage for all students.
- Invest in local community and regional arts, science and heritage organizations, allowing greater outreach and integration into school curricula and other community programs;

- Pay for the costs of student transportation and admission that are a barrier to many schools and families, particularly those who are economically and/or geographically underserved;
- Help local organizations bring programs directly to people in their communities through expanded direct-access programming.
- Provide better sustainability to the organizations that provide inspirational programming, so that they are financially able to hold ticket prices down and continue and enhance their programs for youth and community impact.

The Cultural Access Program will establish an independent oversight board and be subject to annual audits.

When King county successfully enacts Cultural Access legislation it will be able to celebrate a number of significant impacts and benefits in future years:

Greater Equity

- Increased cultural access for all will promote curiosity, creativity and connectivity across diverse communities for shared cultural literacy.
- Sustainable organizations will produce a broad array of program offerings that are relevant to diverse communities.
- Free or discounted tickets and memberships for youths, seniors and low income persons will increase access equity.
- Boards, staffs and programs of the organizations in the cultural sector will be more equitable and reflect our community, through employment opportunities and equitable treatment.

Vibrant Educational Experiences

- The county's school districts will have the capacity and resources to execute a funded plan for integrated arts, science and heritage learning. These programs can be tailored to individual school district needs-- from size and student population, to specific cultural or socioeconomic factors. Scalable and dynamic, these programs will be enhanced with classroom support and related onsite visits to performances and exhibits for all King County students.

A Stronger Economy

- The Cultural Access Program will drive increasing economic impact, direct and indirect job creation, community development and cultural vitality.

Capacity Building

- Cultural Access Program funding will enable organizations large and small to have broader and deeper human impact through programs and services that reach constituents where they live in local communities.