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# Welcome to the Seattle Arts Commission!

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## About The Seattle Arts Commission

The 16-member Seattle Arts Commission, citizen volunteers appointed by the mayor and City Council, supports the ARTS office. Commission members include artists, arts professionals and other citizens with diverse backgrounds and strong links to Seattle's arts community. The mayor appoints seven of the commissioners; the City Council appoints seven, and a 15th member is selected by those 14. An additional commissioner is selected through the YMCA's "Get Engaged" program.

### Mission

The Seattle Arts Commission supports the City by advocating for arts policy, creating access for equitable participation in the arts, and fostering enriching arts engagement for all residents.

### Commitment to Racial Equity

The Seattle Arts Commission emphatically shares the Office of Arts & Culture's [Commitment to Racial Equity.](https://www.seattle.gov/arts/about-us) As an advisory body grounded in our common pledge to fostering racial and social justice, we leverage our collective strength and breadth of knowledge to advocate for racial equity in arts policy, programming and funding. We do this work by centering communities of color in our united effort with the City to help build a just and liberated society for all.

### Meetings

The Seattle Arts Commission meets on the second Tuesdays of every month at 4pm, unless otherwise noted. Please check the Commission webpage for meetings details: <https://www.seattle.gov/arts/about-us/seattle-arts-commission>

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# Committee Structure

**Seattle Arts Commission**

**Facilities and Equitable Development Committee**

*Meets on third Tuesdays of the month at 4-5pm (virtual)*

The Facilities and Equitable Development Committee advises the work of the Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) around issues of cultural space and its impact on equitable development.

**Cultural Investments Committee**

*Meets on third Thursdays of the month at 2-3pm (virtual)*

The Cultural Investments Committee 1) provides guidance and feedback on the ARTS office’s racially equitable grant processes & investment strategies and 2) advocates for equitable, accessible, and inclusive cultural investments.

**Public Art Advisory Committee**

*Meets on the fourth Tuesdays of the month at 9-11am (hybrid)*

The Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) serves to review and recommend public art projects and programs, develop and amend the Municipal Art Plan, and advocate for percent-for-art projects in public/private partnerships. The PAAC operates, promotes, and supports the development of art in public places including parks, libraries, community centers, roadways, bridges, and other public venues to enrich citizens' daily lives and give voice to artists.

# Definition of a City Board / Commission

* The City does not differentiate between "board" and "commission" and generally uses the terms interchangeably. This appears to be true at the State level as well.
* While we understand that many Arts Commissioners may have served or are serving on non-profit organization boards, there are key differences in the roles and responsibilities between those of a non-profit board and a City commission/board.
  + The purpose of a non-profit board is to ensure the success of its organization by determining a mission, providing financial oversight, ensuring adequate resources, ensuring legal integrity, and ensuring effective organizational planning.
  + The purpose of a City commission/board is to provide advice to the City regarding a specific sector’s needs, programs, or policies. Unlike a non-profit board, a City commission/board is an independent advisory body that does not report to or need to always be in concert with the Mayor. Serving the public interest should be its top priority. A City commission/board has the agency to work on behalf of the community they represent.
* Below is language from the State’s [Boards and Commissions Membership Handbook](https://www.governor.wa.gov/boards-commissions) that also applies to the advisory role of boards and commissions at the City level:
  + *The Advisory Role: Members of advisory bodies provide an important link among the public and agencies, the Legislature and the Governor. The information that members provide about community needs and opinions can have a profound effect on state policies and lead to better service. Advisory board members play a very special role in creating recommendations on important societal and governmental issues. If you are appointed as a member of an advisory board, you will be expected to:*
    - *Interpret community opinions, attitudes and needs to agencies, the Legislature and the Governor.*
    - *Study programs and services and analyze issues and needs.*
    - *Offer proposals and recommend changes in programs, policies and standards.*
    - *Provide the public with information and interpretation of department and state policies, programs and budgets.*
  + *Advisory boards support and counsel departmental and gubernatorial staff. They make important recommendations about policy. Most advisory boards, however, do not create or administer policy, programs or services, unless this power is granted to them by their governing statute. When presenting recommendations to an agency, the Legislature or the Governor, it is essential that board members keep the following in mind:*
    - *Recommendations should be in written form.*
    - *Ideas should be expressed in clear and concise language.*
    - *Proposed solutions should be viable and cost-effective.*
    - *Recommendations should identify reasons for the changes suggested.*
    - *Advice should reflect the views of a consensus or a majority of board members.*
  + *Being an Effective Board Member: Despite the different sizes and types of Washington boards and commissions, it is imperative that board members recognize they are in a critical position to shape and influence board decisions and actions. It is important that each member keeps informed and up-to-date on issues, legislative activity and statutes affecting their board.* 
    - *Attend all board meetings.*
    - *Are well prepared for meetings.*
    - *Recognize that serving the public interest is the top priority.*
    - *Recognize that the board must operate in an open and public manner.*
    - *Are knowledgeable about the legislative process and issues affecting the board.*
    - *Examine all available evidence before making a judgment.*
    - *Communicate well and participate in group discussions.*
    - *Are aware that authority to act is granted to the board as a whole, not to individual members.*
    - *Exhibit a willingness to work with the group in making decisions.*
    - *Recognize that compromise may be necessary to reach consensus.*
    - *Do not let personal feelings toward other board members or staff interfere with their judgment.*

# Seattle Arts Commission & Office of Arts & Culture Budget

**City of Seattle Budget Process Summary**

In its simplest terms, the City budget is:

* **proposed by the Mayor (Executive);**
* **checked for compliance with the law (City Attorney)**;
* **amended and passed by the City Council (Legislative);**
* **returns to the Mayor for approval and signature**

The budget itself is composed of two main documents: an operating budget and a capital improvement program (CIP) budget. The CIP budget consists of largeexpenditures on infrastructure and other capital projects. The operating budget is primarily composed of expenditures required by the City to deliver the day-to-day array of City services.

**ARTS Budget Summary**

The Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) is funded primarily by Admission Tax revenue and the 1% for Art Program. This funding supports arts-related programs and capital expenditures to keep artists living and working in Seattle, builds community through arts and cultural events and the placement of public art, and increases arts opportunities for youth. ARTS commits to an anti-racist work practice that centers the creativity and leadership of LGBTQIA+ and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)– those most impacted by structural racism – to move toward systems that benefit us all.

**Timeline & SAC Involvement/Advocacy**

**February – April**

* Prepare budget priorities letter. By May 1 of each year **the Arts Commission shall** **submit a letter to the Mayor** on its priorities for the funds solely allocated for the use of ARTS for the following budget year.

**May 1**

* Budget priorities letter due to Mayor

**June**

* Department budget submittals due to Mayor first week of June

**September**

* Mayor presents the Proposed Budget and CIP to City Council on the last Monday of the month.

**September – November**

* **Within 15 days of the Mayor’s presentation of the proposed budget, the Arts Commission shall** **submit a letter to City Council** on the proposed ARTS budget, including how the proposed budget reflects the funding priorities set forth in the budget priorities letter to the Mayor.
* Council develops a list of issues for review during October and November.
* During Council’s review period, the Arts Commission should keep an eye on City Council’s website as they open up their meetings for public comment and advance sign-up is required to do so. The Arts Commission should share its funding priorities with community/networks and invite them to participate in public comment.

**November – December**

* Council adopts operation budget and CIP.

**Additional Info**

* For more information on the City’s budget visit this link: <https://www.seattle.gov/city-budget-office/budget-archives>
* For budget-specific questions, you may reach out to ARTS’ Finance Manager Allie McGehee at [alexandra.mcgehee2@seattle.gov](mailto:alexandra.mcgehee2@seattle.gov)

# City of Seattle Boards & Commissions Information

## Main Point of Contact:

Thao Madsen, Boards & Commissions Program Manager  
Office of the City Clerk  
[thao.madsen@seattle.gov](mailto:thao.madsen@seattle.gov)  
206-684-8152

## Seattle Arts Commission Liaison:

Allie Lee, Executive Assistant  
Office of Arts & Culture  
[allie.lee@seattle.gov](mailto:allie.lee@seattle.gov)  
206-733-9378

# Seattle Arts Commission By-Laws

ARTICLE I

Organization

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| Membership | Sec. 1 | The Seattle Arts Commission will be composed of 16 members; 15 members will be appointed to serve for two years beginning on January 1 and one member will be selected through the YMCA's "Get Engaged" program to serve for one year beginning on September 1. |
| Appointment | Sec. 2 | The Commission, in consultation with the Mayor's Office and/or the City Council if requested, will publicly solicit nominations to fill vacant positions, review applicants' credentials, and make recommendations. Applicants should be committed to programs and objectives of the Office of Arts & Culture. Membership as a whole should represent, as much as is possible, the diversity of Seattle’s cultural community and the city’s demographics. Membership may include, but is not limited to professional artists, arts educators, art administrators, and arts advocates. |
| Attendance | Sec. 3 | Attendance at Commission and committee meetings is expected. Commissioners are required to inform the office of anticipated absences. In the event of three or more absences in a year, the Chair and/or the Director will take appropriate action, including, but not limited to, recommending removal from the commission.  (Notification of an absence to the Executive Assistant, prior to the Commission meeting, is necessary in order to ensure a quorum at the monthly Commission meeting). |
| Leave Policy | Sec. 4 | Subject to majority vote by the Commission, a Commissioner may take a leave of absence for personal or professional reasons and temporarily be removed for the Commission service for up to 12 months, relinquishing voting privileges and committee chair or co-chair positions; and resume their Commission position in full for the same amount of time as leave taken or until the end of that calendar year. An interim, At-Large Commissioner may be appointed by the Commission for the duration of the leave or until the end of that calendar year; the selected At-Large Commissioner is not precluded from serving a full term on SAC if appointed to serve a normal term of Commission service. |
| Removal | Sec. 5 | The Mayor may remove any appointed members subject to confirmation by a majority of the City Council. |
| Extension of Time | Sec. 6 | Terms may be extended to accommodate scheduling and the confirmation of new commission appointees. |
| Vacancies | Sec. 7 | Vacancies will be filled for unexpired terms in a manner similar to original appointment. |
| Officers | Sec. 8 | A Chair or Co-Chairs will be appointed annually by the commissioners in consultation with the Director. The Chair or Co-Chairs will appoint committee chairs, subject to the approval of the full Commission. |
| Duties of Chair | Sec. 9 | The Chair shall exercise general supervision over the Commission's business and affairs, performing all the duties incidental to the office and those required by the Charter of the City of Seattle, law, ordinance, and these by-laws, as well as those duties that are properly delegated by the Commission.  S/he will preside at all meetings and have those powers generally assigned such an officer. S/he will act as spokesperson for the Commission and as its representative at meetings with other organizations and committees unless such representation is otherwise authorized by the Commission. The Chair may, however, delegate to any Commission member or the staff performance of any duties imposed by this section. No pronouncement made as spokesperson or representative will obligate or commit the Commission except as provided by these by-laws or unless authorized by the Commission.  The Chair may adjust, for good and sufficient reason, the regular convening time of meetings and hearings as set forth in these by- laws. Every effort will be made to advise, at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of adjusted convening time, each Commission member, the press, and the public. |
| Committees | Sec. 10 | The Commission, by resolution adopted by a majority of Commissioners, may designate or appoint one or more standing or ad-hoc committees, each of which shall consist of two or more Commissioners. Such committees shall have and exercise the authority of the Commissioners in support of the Commission.  The designation and appointment of any such committee and delegation thereto of authority shall not relieve the Commission or any individual Commissioner of any responsibility imposed upon him or her by appointment. |
| Chair Ex-officio | Sec. 11 | The Chair serves ex-officio on all committees. |
| Representatives | Sec. 12 | With the approval of the Commission, the Chair may designate representatives from the Commission and staff, or other individuals with the appropriate qualifications, to serve on special purpose committees or organizations, as is deemed necessary. Such representation shall be in an advisory or observation capacity only. When such representatives are appointed, their duties and terms will be defined in writing and attached to these by-laws. |
| Act as Body | Sec 13. | The Commission acts as a body in making its decisions announcing them. No member may use agency letterhead or speak or act for the Commission without prior authorization from the Chair. |
| Address | Sec. 14 | The address of the Commission shall be: Office of Arts & Culture  City of Seattle  *Mailing Address:*  PO Box 94748 Seattle, WA 98124-4748  *Street Address:*  303 S. Jackson Street  Top Floor  Seattle, WA 98104 |

ARTICLE II

Meetings

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| Public Meetings | Sec. 1 | All meetings of the Seattle Arts Commission that reach quorum, as defined below in Sec. 5, will be open to the public with the exception of Executive Session. |
| Place of Public Meetings | Sec. 2 | Unless otherwise determined by the Commission, all regular public meetings or hearings will be held at 303 S. Jackson Street (King Street Station Top Floor). In the event a change in location is necessary, effort will be made to so inform the public in advance. |
| Meetings | Sec. 3 | Meetings of the Commission, which are open to the public, will be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 303 S. Jackson Street (King Street Station Top Floor). Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary. |
| Agenda & Advance Notice for Regularly Scheduled Public Mtgs. | Sec. 4 | The staff will prepare and the Chair will approve an agenda for each public meeting, prior to the meeting. Additional agenda items may be proposed by any member of the Commission. Each Commission member will receive advance notice of each regularly scheduled Commission meeting, and the agenda. |
| Quorum | Sec. 5 | A majority of the current members of the Commission constitute a quorum in Commission meetings. In committee meetings, the majority of all committee members is a quorum. Provided there is a quorum, a majority of those present are required to ratify a vote. |
| Special Meetings | Sec. 6 | Special meetings of the Commission may be held whenever and wherever the Commission may determine. The Chair may call such meetings. The Chair will issue such a call upon the written request of five (5) or more Commission members. |
| Committee Meetings | Sec. 7 | Committee meetings are open to the public and will be held at the Commission offices unless reason exists to hold them at another location. Meetings will be scheduled in advance by the Committee Chair, in consultation with staff; an agenda will be prepared at the direction of the Chair and its substance conveyed to all Commissioners, and public notice given. |

ARTICLE III

Records, Publications, and Reports

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| Books & Records | Sec. 1 | All books and records of the Commission will be open to public inspection. |
| Annual Report | Sec. 2 | The Commission will annually request that the Director make a report to the Mayor and City Council outlining the Commission's goals and objectives, and progress toward achieving them; describing its programs and the amount of business transacted; and containing recommendations as to any legislation deemed necessary or advisable by the Commission to improve the service rendered by the Office of Arts & Culture.  Members of the Commission will be given an opportunity to review the draft of the annual report. |
| Meeting Minutes | Sec. 3 | Minutes of all Commission public meetings will be promptly recorded and maintained and available for public inspection. |
| Meeting Minutes | Sec. 4 | Meeting minutes will consist primarily of a record of action taken and shall be framed generally in accord with Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.  Minutes of each meeting will be subject to approval by the Commission and will be signed by the Chair. Minutes in proposed form for any particular meeting will be forwarded to each Commission member prior to the subsequent meeting for appraisal and action at such subsequent meeting. |
|  | Sec. 5 | By May 1 of each year the Commission shall submit a written report to the Director of the Office of Arts and Culture on its priorities for the funds solely allocated for the use of the Office of Arts and Culture for the following budget year. |
|  | Sec. 6 | Within fifteen (15) days of the Mayor’s presentation of the proposed budget the Commission shall provide the City Council with written comments on the proposed Office of Arts and Culture’s budget, including how the proposed budget reflects the funding priorities set forth in the Commission’s written report to the Director as more fully described in Section 5 immediately above. |

ARTICLE IV

Accounting and Funds

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| Annual Budget | Sec. 1 | The Commission will review the annual budget submitted by the Director to the City Budget Office.  The Chair of the Commission and the Director will represent the Commission at the City Council budget hearings. |
|  | Sec. 2 | The Commission shall comment on the draft policies developed by the Office of Arts and Culture concerning the use of Arts Account funds prior to those draft policies being submitted to the City Council for formal review and consideration. |

ARTICLE V

Adoption and Revision of By-Laws

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| Adoption | Sec. 1 | The Commission will adopt these by-laws for the conduct of its business. Copies of such by-laws shall be made available for public inspection. |
|  | Sec. 2 | The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised will govern this Commission in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws. |
|  | Sec. 3 | These by-laws, as adopted by the Commission, may be revised Or amended at any regular meeting by a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Commission, provided that notification of such proposed revision or amendment had been made to Commissioners thirty (30) days prior to vote. |
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ARTICLE VI

Ethics

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| City Code of Ethics | Sec. 1 | The Seattle Arts Commission complies with the provisions of the Code of Ethics of the City of Seattle. |
| Accepting Tickets | Sec. 2 | Commissioners and staff may accept tickets according to the Commission's "Policy on Site Visits," adopted June 1992 and appended to these by-laws. |
| Ineligibility for Funding | Sec. 3 | A Commissioner is not eligible to apply for funding, as an individual, from the Commission for one year from the date his/her term of office ends; nor to participate, as an individual, in any specific project developed for the Municipal Art Plan during his/her term of office. |
| Panels | Sec. 4 | Commissioners shall not be paid for any services. |

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# Seattle Arts Commission - Ordinance

<http://clerk.seattle.gov/search/ordinances/121006>

*(City of Seattle Legislative Information Service)*

**SMC 3.14.830 Seattle Arts Commission-Duties**

The Seattle Arts Commission shall have the following duties:

A. Promote greater public participation in, and access to, arts and culture;

B. Advocate for the role of arts and culture in civic life, and for the value of arts in education;

C. Encourage donations and grants to the Civic Arts Account of the General Donation and Gift Fund and advise the Director of the Office of Arts and Culture regarding the receipt and expenditure of such funds;

D. Advise the City concerning the receipt of or purchase of works of art to be placed on municipal property, except for museums or art galleries or works of art placed or to be placed in connection with projects reviewed by the Seattle Design Commission;

E. Advise and assist the City in connection with such other artistic activities as may be referred to it by the City;

F. By May 1 of each year, submit a written report to the Director of the Office of Arts and Culture on the Commission's priorities for the funds solely allocated for the use of the Office of Arts and Culture for the following budget year. This report shall be provided to the City Council and shall be included in any initial budget recommendations made by the Director to the Mayor;

G. Within 15 days of the Mayor's presentation of the proposed budget, provide the City Council with written comments on the proposed Office of Arts and Culture budget, including how the proposed Office of Arts and Culture budget reflects the funding priorities outlined in subsection F of this Section 3.14.83;

H. Initiate, sponsor or conduct, alone or in cooperation with other public or private agencies, public programs to further the development and public awareness of, and interest in, the fine and performing arts;

I. Hold regular public meetings and keep a written record of its proceedings which shall be a public record; and

J. Adopt administrative rules and procedures necessary to accomplish its purposes.