Creative Districts
Program Overview

Program overview
The Certified Creative Districts program works to help communities in Washington thrive. Managed by ArtsWA, it is a new legislative initiative designed to support the state’s creative economy. Its purpose is to help communities strengthen their creative sector, diversify their economy, and enhance their quality of life.

How we support your community
ArtsWA’s role is to guide communities as they seek District certification and implement their programs. In addition to providing Creative District certification, we:

- Offer specialized resources during the pre-certification phase.
- Support and track the progress of a community’s creative economy after certification.
- Provide technical assistance, training and networking opportunities for Creative District communities.

About ArtsWA
Established in 1961, the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) works to support communities to bring art into the lives of all those who live in Washington State. Our mission is to be a catalyst for the arts, advancing the role of the arts in the lives of individuals and communities throughout the state.

For more information, contact:
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2016 Creative Economy in WA
BY THE NUMBERS

177,648
CREATIVE JOBS

4%
INCREASE FROM 2015

SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS
COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS
GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
MARKETING MANAGERS

$21.9B
TOTAL INDUSTRY EARNINGS

$51,251
AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY ACROSS THE SECTOR

$26.37
AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS
Help Your Community Thrive with Creative District Certification

What is a Certified Creative District?
A Creative District is an exciting place to live, work in, and visit. It's a geographically defined area of cultural and economic activity within a larger community. It's the heart of a community - a focal point for people to gather and enjoy the arts and culture a community has to offer.

It can include cultural facilities, creative industries, arts-related organizations, and other businesses that support or complement these activities. It's a vehicle to grow jobs and create economic opportunities for people. And it's a place where innovation and creativity can thrive, helping a community move enthusiastically into the future.

By focusing on the creative economy, communities can grow jobs; increase economic, educational, and cultural opportunities; and boost the livability quotient for residents and visitors.

How will Creative District certification benefit my community?
Creative district certification will benefit your community in a number of ways. You can:

• Promote your community’s unique identity
• Grow jobs and economic opportunities for all citizens
• Increase tourism and bring new visitors
• Attract new artists, creative businesses & investment
• Set the stage to improve or redevelop historic assets
• Find opportunities around affordable housing, live/work, and maker space
• Proactively develop your community’s long-term future

In Colorado, designated creative communities have seen a 5 percent annual increase in employment, and a 6 percent jump in revenue.

How does the certification process work?

1. Gather
   Gather a broad community planning team and decide to proceed.

2. Plan
   Work with your team on the Community Readiness Toolkit to plan your Creative District.

3. Apply
   Write and submit a formal application, which will go to a review panel for consideration.

4. Begin
   If your community gains certification, begin to implement your plan and track your progress.

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