



WASHINGTON STATE ARTS COMMISSION

Creative Districts Program Overview



Buskers in the Burg Festival Arts Parade, Ellensburg WA. Photo courtesy of Ellensburg Downtown Association.

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

OCCUPATIONS WITH GREATEST
NUMBER OF JOBS STATEWIDE

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



Mural painted by artist Patrick Siler on the wall of Thomas Hammer Coffee Roasters, Pullman, WA. Photo by Terry Richard, *The Oregonian*.

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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