

Eastern Washington State Historical Society

In compliance with the budget reduction exercise request from the Director of OFM, we are submitting our budget reduction proposal. We are willing to withdraw our decision package requests for the Exhibitions Manager and the Campbell House Curator. While those positions are needed, they are positions we can make do without for the time being, at least more so than our other position requests.

Two of the four remaining decision package requests are absolutely critical to us due to the fact that EWSHS is being reaccredited in 2025 by the Alliance of American Museums (AAM). If the museum is not reaccredited or is conditionally reaccredited, we will:

- Lose the ability to borrow exhibitions from other museums and touring agencies.
- Lose the ability to borrow objects from other museums for exhibitions, including our regional partner museums and larger national ones, including the Smithsonian Museum.
- Be at risk of lost opportunities for major travelling exhibitions to the museum, such as the recent popular MineCraft, Pompeii, and Titanic exhibitions, which were critical for community outreach and generating revenue.

To ensure that the agency is in the best position to be reaccredited, we critically need the following two positions:

- **The Art Curator** position is necessary for our agency to pass our 2025 reaccreditation by the Alliance of American Museums (AAM). This position is a fundamental need of the agency but was cut due to recession budget shortfalls in 2011, which happened after our last reaccreditation. The reaccreditation team will note that most of our exhibitions are art exhibitions but they are largely organized by contractors or outside organizations. Additionally, the art objects in our permanent collection (over 4000 works of art) do not have direct oversight regarding their disposition and their interpretation through exhibitions and publications. Without the critical support of an Art Curator, we risk failing the reaccreditation process, as this position, and the art program, are central to our agency.
- The temporary, 3-year **Deaccession Coordinator** position is also necessary for AAM reaccreditation in 2025. The deaccession process entails identifying objects and art works in the permanent collection that do not serve the mission of the museum or are in the collection for reasons that are not clear, and their disposal (donate to other museums or take to auction). The museum has been collecting since 1916 and many objects that have been accepted, especially in the first 75 years, should

not have been accepted. Deaccession is a best practice among museums and a critical part of our reaccreditation process, but the agency has not had staff capacity to devote the time and attention needed to evaluate the collections and document the necessary processes that deaccession and disposal requires. Additionally, over the years some items have been deaccessioned but not disposed of due to lack of staff capacity. This is now an issue, as they are not part of our collection but we expend resources for their care and storage.

Additionally, the agency is requesting a Tribal Liaison. Currently we are out of State compliance with RCW 43.376.020, which requires State agencies to have a Tribal Liaison. This position is especially needed in our agency for the frequent and ongoing interactions and negotiations the museum has with various tribes to address collection issues (repatriation, contested objects, interpretation), and programmatic and exhibition development. The Tribal liaison is also needed to establish MOUs with our local tribes to standardize our interactions. The Washington State Historical Society and ArtsWA have had their tribal liaisons funded in the past two years. Given the budget restraints, we understand that this is a challenge, but this is a statutorily mandated position, one that has been funded for the other two cultural agencies.

We understand that the state is in a challenging financial environment right now. We are certainly willing to talk to you more about our budget if needed.

Thanks!

Francis Langston, CFO

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DBA Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture or “The MAC”