

Wisconsin's Creative Economy Coalition: Bipartisan coalition seeks one-time funds for Wisconsin's arts and creative industries

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[Madison, Wis.] – In case you missed it, a coalition of leaders in Wisconsin's creative economy joined forces to advocate the state Legislature to bolster local economies and community well-being through a \$100m investment towards the arts and cultural sector in Wisconsin, where funding currently sits at 14 cents per capita and ranks last in the nation. The creative sector is a major driver in Wisconsin's economy, generating \$10.8 billion in economic value and supporting nearly 90,000 jobs in the state.

The coalition, made up of over 130 members and supporting organizations from the state's arts and creative sector – including film and video, music, performing and visual arts, museums, heritage sites, venues, festivals, and other cultural events – notes that this funding is critical to revitalizing our communities and putting a stop to the brain drain of young, creative workers who leave Wisconsin for places like Minnesota, which funds its creative sector at over 50 times the rate of Wisconsin.

Read the full story [here](#) or find excerpts below.

Bipartisan coalition seeks one-time funds for Wisconsin's arts and creative industries

Mitchell Schmidt

Wisconsin State Journal

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A new coalition of more than 100 Wisconsin arts organizations and businesses have called on the state legislature to dedicate \$100 million in state funds to fulfill the pledge made in a more than 20-year-old endowment foundation aimed at supporting economic development across the state.

*Formally launched this week, the **Wisconsin's Creative Economy Coalition** seeks to finish bipartisan efforts that started in 2001 with the creation of the Wisconsin Artistic Endowment Foundation. The foundation was recommended by a study committee and signed into the state budget in 2001 by former Republican Gov. Scott McCallum, but a funding mechanism was never established.*

Patrick Rath, president of the United Performing Arts Fund, said state funding will be necessary in order for many of Wisconsin's cultural institutions to survive.

"The future for these organizations continues to be fragile as private funding alone cannot keep up with rising costs," Rath said in a statement. "If we want these and all of Wisconsin's creative hubs to be vibrant and here for future generations, investment needs to be made now before arts sector talent leaves our state."

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According to information provided by the coalition, Wisconsin spends just 14 cents per capita to fund state arts organizations, ranking last in the nation. Minnesota spends \$7.34 per-capita, while Illinois spends \$5.04.

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Lawmakers enter the budget session with a more than \$7 billion estimated state surplus, with a good portion of that consisting of one-time funds.

Republicans, who control the state's budget committee, have signaled plans to largely scrap Democratic Gov. Tony Evers' proposed 2023-25 biennial budget proposal. The committee will begin crafting its version of the state's next two-year spending plan in the weeks ahead.

[Read the full story here.](#)