

ADVOCATING FOR WSU PRIORITIES IN OLYMPIA

Washington State University is committed to serving the public good by providing accessible education, impactful research, and community service. For more than 135 years, WSU has unlocked possibilities by empowering students, faculty, and community partners to create a world where all people can thrive.



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON'S LAND-GRANT RESEARCH INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY:

Educates more than

25,500

students across

FIVE

physical campuses and
its online Global Campus

Offers

200+

undergraduate
programs and nearly

150

graduate and
professional programs

Conducts

RESEARCH

tackling society's
toughest challenges



WSU fuels Washington's economy by partnering with key industries like agriculture, aerospace, health care, tech and more—supporting thousands of jobs and generating billions in economic activity.

WSU is partnering with legislators in Olympia to set the following priorities for the January 2026 session:

OPERATING BUDGET REQUESTS

Supporting our academic student employees

WSU requests \$4.72 million in annual funding to cover costs from its collective bargaining agreement with academic student employees. These students (mostly graduate assistants), drive WSU's critical teaching, research, and public service activities. They work as the next generation of faculty and researchers, developing innovative solutions to the state's current and future challenges.

In 2024, the state appropriated \$2.5 million to support the agreement, but that amount covered only 51 percent of the projected cost. Consequently, WSU had to find funding for the remaining 49 percent, which forced the university to make reductions in other critical areas. Fulfilling this commitment to our state's students increases productivity, strengthens the student experience, stops institutional funding loss, and bolsters employee retention to effectively meet the state's workforce demands.

Securing ROAR: Preserving higher education for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities

WSU offers a unique educational opportunity with a residential component for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities—a group historically marginalized from higher education.

The two-year ROAR program on the Pullman campus began with a five-year Department of Education grant awarded in 2020. Since its inception, the program grew rapidly, expanding from just four students in 2020 to 28 students in 2024.

WSU now requests \$600,000 in the supplemental operating budget to preserve this hugely impactful program and maintain affordability for participating families. ROAR is one of just six such higher education programs in the region, and it stands as the only one offering a residential component.

CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS

WSU requests funding to resolve a backlog of deferred maintenance projects and to renovate space in Spokane, WA, immediately bolstering health care training.

Tackling deferred maintenance

A backlog of deferred maintenance projects threatens vital assets essential to WSU's teaching and research mission at locations throughout the state. The requested funds will directly support projects that also ensure WSU meets clean building regulations and health and environmental protections.

Increasing capacity for simulation-based health care training

WSU requests funds to renovate its existing Spokane footprint. This renovation will expand capacity for simulation-based training spaces, allowing students to train effectively and develop into the crucial health care providers our state needs.

Workforce shortages challenge Washington state's health systems, severely straining the availability of clinical training opportunities. Simultaneously, simulation training must now count for a greater share of required clinical training hours. To meet this need, WSU's health science programs use interprofessional simulation, where future physicians, nurses, and pharmacists work alongside one another to address patient needs in real-world scenarios within simulated environments.



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