



Association for Washington Archaeology  
Grants and Scholarships Committee  
Microgrant Program Six-Month Report  
May to October 2022

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AWA Grants and Scholarships Committee

Prepared for:

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## Summary

Since going public in July 2022, the AWA Microgrant Program has distributed \$4,900.00 to 42 individuals. The majority of those the program supported were Washington State residents and/or students, though the grant has also provided financial support to many other individuals across the Pacific Northwestern United States. The program has taken in approximately \$5,724.11 in donations and paid \$4.99 in fees, resulting in a net fundraising of \$5,719.12. Currently, \$819.12 remains.

The Microgrant Program was only able to meet 51 percent of the total financial need requested by applicants. Applicant testimonials identify a number of issues facing PNW archaeologists and heritage professionals, including a lack of support for field schools, familial care obligations, unexpected bills, equipment costs, long-term financial insecurities, and conference support. In order to adapt the program to meet current and future challenges, the AWA Grants and Scholarships Committee plans to roll out improvements in outreach and fundraising efforts, including, but not limited to: more regular and expansive grant announcements; better use of AWA social media resources to request funds; and, time and labor-permitting, exploring other avenues for funding raising.

## I. Introduction

The following report satisfies the transparency and reporting requirements set forth by the Association for Washington Archaeology (AWA) Grants and Scholarships Committee (GSC) and the AWA Board of Directors (Board) for the AWA Microgrant Program. It provides details on the first six months of the operation of the program, the demographics of those who applied to it, and the program's financial state. It also describes the current goals of the AWA GSC regarding the program.

The Association for Washington Archaeology [Microgrant Program](#) was approved by the AWA Board of Directors in May 2022 and launched in June 2022. The AWA Microgrant program offers up to (U.S.) \$200 grants to archaeology students, emerging professionals, and tribal heritage-related employees in the Pacific Northwestern United States (PNW). These are "no-questions-asked" grants which can be used to support any number of things, including (but not limited to) childcare, rent, equipment, tuition, fees, car repair, or general assistance with any cash-flow problem. They're inspired by similar grants offered by Sportula and the Black Trowel Collective.

Grants are handed out once per month, with priority currently going to applicants from excluded, marginalized, or working class/low-income communities or identities, or from those that have experienced colonialism or imperialism. That being said, all individuals are welcome to apply, and the program works to fund all applicants in time.

## **II. General Updates**

### **II.A. Committee Makeup and Meetings**

The AWA GSC currently consists of five members:

- David Carlson (Chair)
- Brandy Rinck (AWA Treasurer)
- Molly Carney
- Merrile Gunnier
- Tom Minichillo

The AWA GSC has met twice since May, once on July 27, and once on September 7. Both were done via Zoom video conferencing. By consensus, no meeting was held in October. During meetings, AWA GSC members finalized rankings of Microgrant applicants and approved the dispersal of funds. AWA GSC members also discussed challenges related to the Microgrant application, including how to best prioritize applicants. In addition, the committee provided some needed clarification to the Microgrant application form. The results of these meetings are described below under “Section II.B. Grant Operations Updates.”

Finally, critical work was conducted between committee meetings. Committee members spent time each week responding to new applications and applicant emails. Initial applications were verified by email and limited background research (typically involving looking up universities to ensure that they were in or likely to have people working in the Pacific Northwest). Applicants were rank ordered according to established criteria, and those rankings were approved either via Zoom meetings or via email correspondence. Once approved, the AWA Treasurer dispersed monies via PayPal or physical mail.

### **II.B Grant Operations Updates**

The AWA Microgrant Program was established with relatively few *specific* guidelines for how to run the grant. Instead, general guidelines and goals were established (see AWA Microgrant FAQs) and approved, with the understanding that more specific operational guidelines would be set forth in the course of the AWA GSC’s operation of the grant. The grant was and remains very much an experiment, and some degree of “learning by doing” has been necessary.

Once applications are received, AWA GSC members first confirm that the applicants did, indeed, apply for the grant (Figure 1). In addition, any lingering qualification issues—typically due to someone forgetting to fill in a required field—are resolved. Occasionally, a light amount of background research is done to confirm that the applicant qualifies for the grant. Once this is complete, the applicant is considered ready for prioritization.

As part of our email responses to applicants, the AWA GSC includes links to potentially relevant funding sources, including those provided by the AWA. This is done to both support the applicant and to encourage further engagement with the AWA.

The AWA GSC works to fund all those who apply. However, when budgets are limited, the committee prioritizes those who apply based on the decision tree and prioritization scheme outlined in Figure 2. Once applicants have been ranked into one of six categories, the list of ranked applicants is sent to the AWA GSC for approval. At that point, changes in applicant ranking can be made depending on specific contextual or situational factors that individual members can bring up. The six basic rankings for applicants are as follows:

1. Applicants from minoritized/excluded/exploited communities or identities who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in previous months, but (b) have yet to receive an award.
2. All other applicants who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in previous months, but (b) have yet to receive an award.
3. Applicants from minoritized/excluded/exploited communities or identities who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in the current month, but (b) have yet to receive an award.
4. All other applicants who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in the current month, but (b) have yet to receive an award.
5. Applicants from minoritized/excluded/exploited communities or identities who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in the current or previous months and (b) have received an award.
6. All other applicants who (a) have applied to the Microgrant in the current or previous months and (b) have received an award.

In addition to refining the ranking scheme, the committee has provided some needed clarification to the Microgrant application form. Specifically, a question on the form initially asked if the applicant was a “Student”, an “Emerging Professional”, or a “Tribal Heritage-related Employee.” To avoid confusion about who qualifies, the first two entries were changed to “Student who is researching in, working in, or going to school for archaeology, museology, or another heritage-related field or topic” and “Emerging professional who is working in archaeology, museology, or another heritage-related field,” respectively.

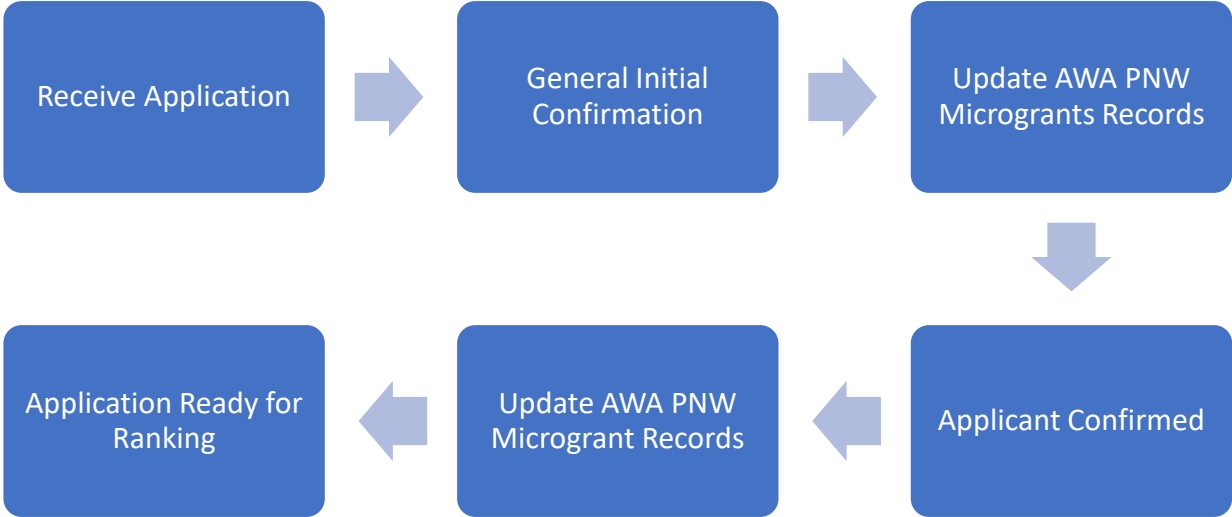


Figure 1. Workflow for handling initial applications.

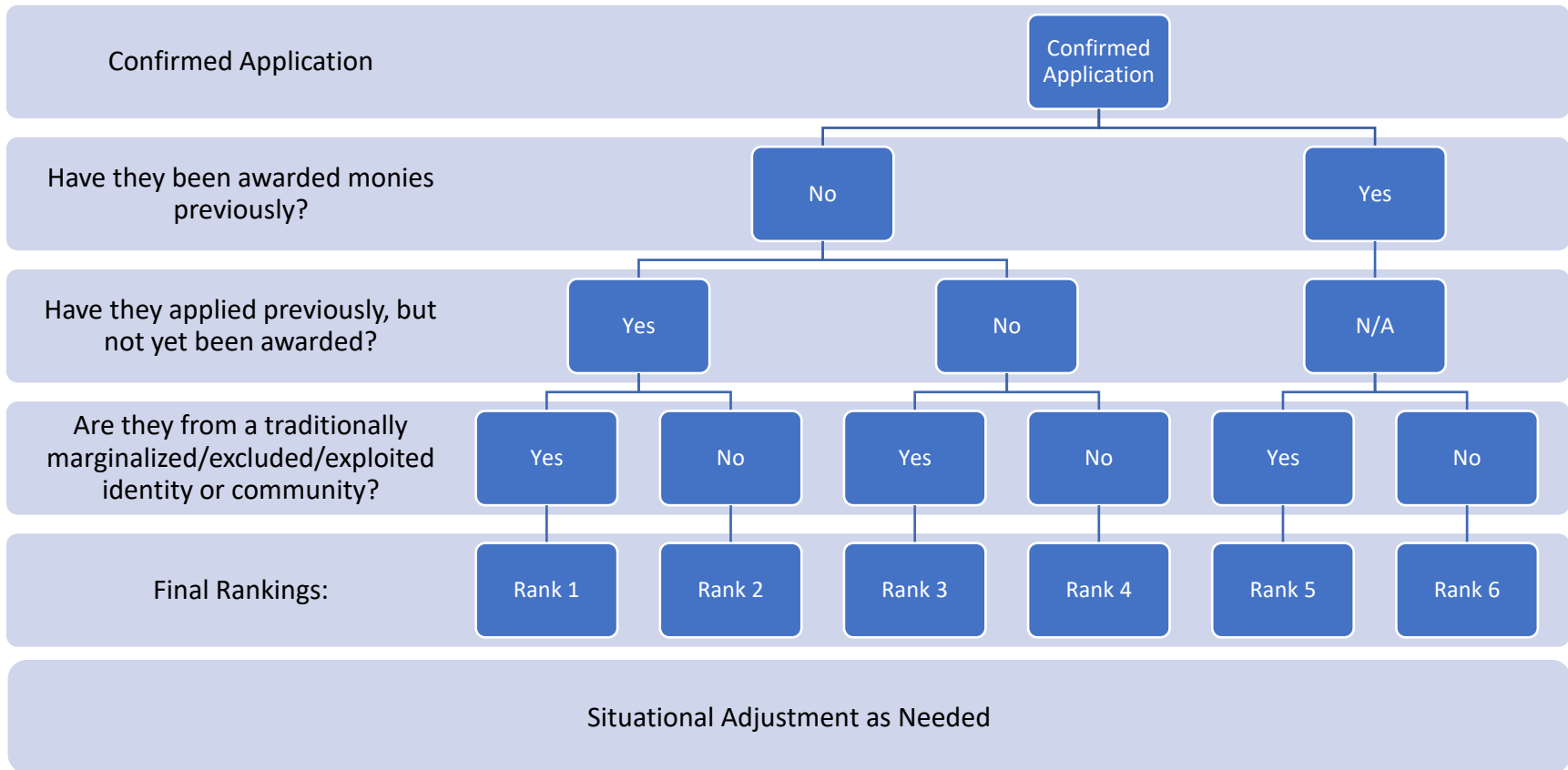


Figure 2. Visual representation of decision-tree for ranking applicants.

### III. Applicants

#### III.A. Applicant Demographics

Since the grant was made public, the AWA GSC has received a total of 57 applications from 50 applicants. Of these, 48 applications from 42 applicants have been funded. The remaining nine applications were not funded. Generally, this was due to a mix of not being qualified or not providing sufficient information to confirm their qualifications. Applicant demographics are summarized in Tables 1 through 4. All told, most applicants were students. Most students were enrolled in a Washington State higher education program. The remaining students were enrolled in higher education programs in Nevada, Oregon, and California, with one student enrolled in a remote degree program through Southern New Hampshire University. The greatest number of student applications came from Western Washington and Washington State University. As with students, most applications from emerging professionals and tribal heritage-related employees were from those who worked primarily in Washington.

Table 1. Breakdown of applications by applicant status

<b>Applicant Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Student	30	63
Student and Emerging Professional	7	15
Emerging Professional	8	17
Emerging Professional and Tribal Heritage-Related Employee	1	2
Tribal Heritage-Related Employee	1	2
Other	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	

Table 2. Breakdown of student applications by state\*

<b>State Enrolled</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Washington	24	63
Oregon	4	10
California	1	3
Nevada	8	21
New Hampshire	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	

*\*This includes both "students" and "students and emerging professionals."*



Table 3. Breakdown of student applications by college\*

<b>College</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Western Washington University	10	26
Washington State University	8	21
Central Washington University	3	8
University of Washington	2	5
Edmonds College	1	2.6
Oregon State University	2	5
University of Oregon	1	2.6
Portland State University	1	2.6
University of Nevada-Reno	7	18
University of California-Santa Cruz	1	2.6
University of New Mexico	1	2.6
Southern New Hampshire University	1	2.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	

\*This includes both "students" and "students and emerging professionals."

Table 4. Breakdown of emerging professional and tribal-heritage related employee applications by state.

<b>State of Primary Work</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Washington	4	40
Oregon	1	10
California	2	20
California and Idaho	1	10
General PNW	2	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	

### III.B. Applicant Testimonials

We asked for permission to share the stories of the applicants. Some did not wish to be disclosed at all, while others were okay with disclosure. Regardless, some of the following testimonials have been slightly edited to reduce the likelihood of an applicant being identified. All told, they paint a picture of the kinds of impediments and struggles facing students, emerging professionals, and tribal employees in Pacific Northwestern archaeology. Applicants spoke of a variety of issues, including, but not limited to, the need for help for basic field equipment, financial support in school, car repair, needing to pay rent, and even facing issues of food insecurity.

- Uvluluataq! I am an Inupiaq museum studies graduate student. I am finishing up my thesis this summer so I can graduate in December. My thesis is a collaborative research project...To do my research, I need to travel...for a week, which is going to cost me quite a bit for housing and gas (approx. \$650). Any amount of help would be so appreciated!! Thank you so much for providing this opportunity for all interested community members. As a Native, queer, first generation student, my academic journey has been tumultuous and I'm still learning how to take advantage of resources like AWA. Quyaana for everything you provide, and many blessings to you and your families!*

- *I'm a low-income female student currently finishing up my senior year of undergrad, and hoping to pursue a graduate degree in archaeology in the near future. As I write this I am quarantined at home with covid. Being unable to work this past week means finances are tighter than usual, so any financial aid would be greatly appreciated.*
- *I am a Hispanic female student currently taking a field school...I drove from Southern California and gas one way was almost \$1,000. I am also low income and have a 20-hour part-time job to support my household.*
- *Hello, I am a lower-middle-class female who, this summer, started fieldwork for the first time in my archaeology career. I am a Ph.D. student in archaeology, but the majority of my training and education has been in the lab or classroom settings. Due to the pandemic and family illness, my archaeology career was setback until this summer. While I am grateful to begin this part of my career, the funds to begin fieldwork have encroached on my education funds.*
- *I've applied in the past (and my request was generously accepted), but I would like to draw upon your generosity again. I'm in the midst of a scholarship hunt in order to pay for next semester's tuition, as finances are still tight, and would definitely appreciate having a couple hundred in advance to ensure I don't fall short.*
- *Conducting research, costs related to travel and rent*
- *I am grateful for assistance that even partially meets the amount I've asked for. The funds I've requested will help to pay for new safety equipment and possibly also rent.*
- *This money would help fund my mechanic bills for my car, it doesn't have to be the full \$200. Whatever you can spare, if anything, would suffice.*
- *I really appreciate any help! I come from a very working class/poor background & gear is so expensive! My boots are essentially blown out & I plan to use this to buy new ones. I love CRM, but it is not something one does to get rich, lol.*
- *I am an early career woman in archaeology who put a hold on school in order to pursue work experience with a CRM firm. This microgrant would help me with costs associated with attending the SAA conference...where I will be presenting on my research as well as give me the opportunity to network with more senior colleagues.*

#### **IV. Financial Information**

The AWA Microgrant Program has brought in a total of \$5,724.11 between June and October 2022 (Table 5). Approximately \$5,324.11 of that came in the form of one-time donations (Table 6). Of the one-time donations: \$800.00 was initially apportioned by the AWA Board of Directors with the approval of the program; \$3,000.00 was later approved by the AWA Board of

Directors, at the request of the AWA Crisis Relief Committee, as a transfer from that committee to the Microgrant program; and \$1,524.11 came from seven private individuals. The remaining \$400.00 came in the form of recurring donations. The AWA Microgrant Program received \$100.00 per month in the form of monthly donations from July through October. In terms of costs, the program paid \$4.99 in upkeep costs, for a net fundraising total of \$5,719.12.

Table 5. Fundraising and Dispersal Overview

	<b>Current Six-Month</b>	<b>Previous Total</b>	<b>Current Total</b>
Fundraising Gross	\$5,724.11	-	\$5,724.11
Costs	\$4.99	-	\$4.99
Fundraising Net	\$5,719.12	-	\$5,719.12
Total Dispersed	\$4,900	-	\$4,900
Account Balance	\$819.12	-	\$819.12

Table 6. Breakdown of Donations by Type

<b>Type</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Total Amounts</b>		
		<i>Current Six-Month</i>	<i>Previous Total</i>	<i>Current Total</i>
One-Time	AWA	\$800.00	-	\$800.00
	AWA Crisis Relief	\$3,000.00	-	\$3,000.00
	Private	\$1,524.11	-	\$1,524.11
Recurring (Totals)	Monthly	\$400.00	-	\$400.00
	Yearly	\$0.00	-	\$0.00
<b>Totals</b>		\$5,724.11	-	\$5,724.11

A total of \$4,900.00 has been dispersed (Table 7). The total requested amount for this period was \$9,600.00, meaning that the AWA Microgrant Program was able to meet approximately 51 percent of the total need. Of the dispersals, most were given out in July, followed by August, September, and October of 2022. As the AWA GSC was aiming to “spread the wealth” as much as possible, a vast majority (n=47) of dispersals were for \$100.00. Only one was for \$200.00; this was done to support an applicant facing food insecurity. Of the 42 applicants, three were awarded more than once: two applicants received two grants each (totaling \$200.00 each), and one has received four (totaling \$400.00). These applicants reported facing recurring financial stresses, including school-related costs and food insecurity.

As of November 11, 2022, the AWA Microgrant Fund has \$819.12 available to it.

Table 7. Breakdown of Dispersals

Month	Total Dispersals		Amount per Dispersal	
	Amount	Number	\$100	\$200
July	\$1,900	19	19	0
August	\$1,300	13	13	0
September	\$1,200	12	11	1
October	\$400	4	4	0
<b>Six-Month Total</b>	<b>\$4,800</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>
<i>Total Previous</i>	-	-	-	-
<b>Current Total</b>	<b>\$4,800</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>1</b>

## V. Outreach and Awareness Raising

Outreach is of critical importance to the Microgrant Program. Since July 2022, the following outreach measures were taken:

- Between July and August, emails were sent to the AWA Mailing List—as well as to each major Washington State university—announcing the AWA Microgrant Program. Additional emails were sent to community colleges and student groups, where they could be identified.
- The AWA Microgrant Program has advertised through social media, including Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Committee members Molly Carney and Merrile Gunnier designed graphics for this outreach. The Microgrant Program was advertised through the official AWA accounts on Instagram and Facebook. It was advertised through the private accounts of committee members on Twitter. Advertisements were sent out twice: once in July and August, when the program was announced, and once recently in September.
- The program was also advertised through the Society of Black Archaeologists, via their online submission form, in July of 2022.

## VI. Future Plans

Now that the Microgrant Program has unfurled, the AWA GSC has begun considering future improvements to the program and its administration. These include, but are not limited to:

- Considering implementing a more formalized announcement strategy. So far, each of the major email and social media announcements has been followed by an uptick in applications. Developing a formalized strategy for when to advertise the grant may help us maintain interest while avoiding developing excessive wait lists.
- Expanding our outreach more directly to non-Washington institutions. This would presumably have to be done over time, to avoid the aforementioned issue of excessively long wait lists.
- Conducting direct outreach to Washington State Tribes. This is currently being conducted by the AWA GSC chair, David Carlson.
- Formalizing and conducting additional fundraising. So far, the AWA Microgrant Program has been able to “coast” on the monthly donations it receives and monies received from one-time donations and AWA budgeting. Eventually, though, we foresee a need to:
  - Improve our calls for donations, likely by expanding them to include social media and ensuring that donation emails and announcements are not sent out in clusters with other emails; and...
  - Labor-permitting, seek out additional sources of funding, such as CRM companies, granting agencies; and/or...
  - Requesting that the board reopen discussion about raising AWA membership rates to provide additional budgetary support for the program.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

To summarize, the AWA Microgrant Program has distributed \$4,900.00 over the past four months. The majority of those supported were Washington State residents and/or students, though the grant has also provided financial aid to many other individuals within the Pacific Northwest. The Microgrant Program was only able to meet 51 percent of the total amount requested by applicants. There is clearly continuing financial need among PNW archaeologists and heritage professionals, with many identifying a lack of support for field schools, familial care obligations, unexpected bills, equipment costs, long-term financial insecurities, and conference support as sources of struggle. As we continue to adapt the program to meet current and future challenges and needs, we look forward to working with the Board and the AWA to support the next generation of archaeologists.