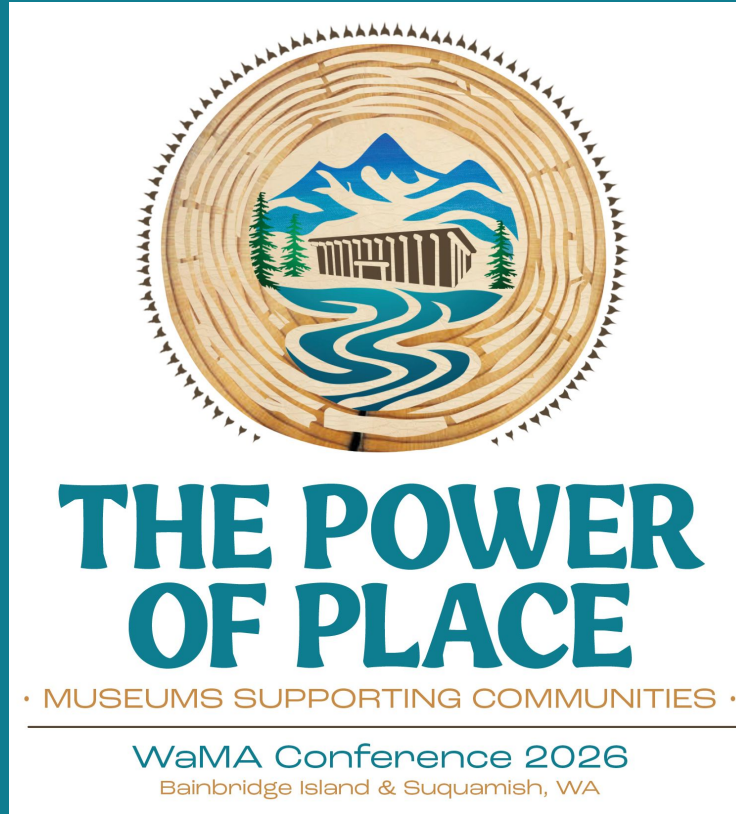


Washington Museum Association



October 19-21, 2026

All You Need to Know About the Annual Conference

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Welcome to the 45th Annual Washington Museum Association Conference

We're delighted to welcome museum professionals, volunteers, students, and partners from across Washington for several days of learning, connection, and inspiration.

Our host organizations — the [Suquamish Museum](#), [Bainbridge Island Museum of Art](#), and [Bainbridge History Museum](#) — invite you to explore the rich history, culture, and creativity of the Suquamish and Bainbridge Island communities. Reconnect with colleagues, build new relationships, share ideas, and discover practical tools to bring back to your organization.

Whether this is your first WaMA conference or your 45th, we're glad you're here. We hope you leave inspired, supported, and energized by the incredible work happening in museums across our state.

Before You Go

- Review the conference schedule.
- Register for workshops, tours, and the awards banquet dinner in advance [these require advanced tickets to be purchased]
- Pack business cards, a note pad, and a pen
- Business casual dress code

Registration Desk Locations

Bainbridge Island Museum of Art | Welcome Party | Monday, October 20 | 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

House of Awakened Culture | Tuesday, October 21 | 8 am

Clearwater Resort | Exhibit Hall | Tuesday, October 21 | 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Clearwater Resort | Exhibit Hall | Wednesday, October 22 | 7:00 am

When checking in, you will receive a conference program and name badge

- The lunch options that you selected upon registering will be on the back of your name tag.
Please adhere to these food selections.
- Canvas tote bags with the new WaMA logo will be available to purchase for \$5

Set Goals

Immediate Needs

What does your museum need ASAP?

Questions & troubleshooting.

What do you need within the next twelve months?

Personal & Professional

Professionalism is defined by practice, not position.

What outcomes—both in learning and in relationship-building—will make this conference a valuable investment for you?

Future Needs

Pie in the Sky ideas.

After the next year.

Anything you need to build towards?

Choosing Sessions & Making a Plan

- Align sessions with your goals
- Mix topics:
 - Skills
 - Leadership
 - Trends
- Leave room for flexibility
- Don't feel pressure to attend everything
- Coordinate with colleagues to cover more ground

Session Types

Workshop | Interactive Session [Oct. 19 | 90-120 min.]

A hands-on, participatory session engaging the audience through activities, discussion, or guided exercises. Designed for learning by doing.

Lecture | Presentation [Oct. 20-21 | 45 min., followed by 15 min. Q&A]

A single speaker (or pair) delivering a prepared talk, usually with slides. Minimal audience interaction beyond Q&A.

Panel Discussion [Oct. 20-21 | 45 min., followed by 15 min. Q&A]

3–5 presenters offering multiple perspectives on a shared topic, moderated by a facilitator. Ends with Q&A.

Roundtable Discussion [Oct. 20-21 | 45 min., followed by 15 min. Q&A]

A facilitated, conversational format in which attendees participate equally. Presenter(s) guide discussion rather than “present.”

Informal Meet Ups [Oct. 20 | 45-60 min.]

Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP) Mixer.

What to do in a Session

Take Notes

- Write down ideas - programming examples, resources (websites)
- Vendors and supplies

Participate

- Ask Questions - there are no dumb questions!
- Participate in the group activities

Keep a To-Do & Inspiration List

- Make this easy on yourself
- Use this to share with others AND create an action list

Talk to the Presenters

- They are there NOW and the information is fresh

Program Tracks

Sessions are divided into tracks which focus on specific areas.

- Collections
- Communications & Marketing
- Community Engagement
- Development
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- Docent & Volunteer Programs
- Education
- Emerging Museum Professionals

- Exhibits
- Guest Services
- Historic Preservation
- Leadership
- Operations
- Outreach & Community Programming
- Special Projects
- Tribal Museums

Networking Tips

- Introduce yourself to new people
- Attend the welcoming reception & social events
- Ask questions and share your work
- Take time to talk to other people (presenters, other attendees, sponsors etc.)
- Follow up after the conference

Meet New Colleagues

Example

Hi, My name is

I Work/volunteer at...

Let me tell you what's cool
about my organization

For The Introverts

Hi, My name is

Nice to meet you, what
organization are you from?

Tell me about it...

FIND

SHARE

SIT

FIND a buddy in your session

SHARE contact information, cards, & emails

SIT with different people during sessions,
meals, & events

Sponsors | Clearwater Exhibit Hall

Every year, our conference brings together people who care deeply about art, heritage, science, and the communities we serve. This conference is made possible in large part by the generosity of our conference sponsors.

Our sponsors are partners in strengthening Washington's museum community, supporting professional development, collaboration, and the future of our sector.

Throughout the conference, we invite you to connect with our sponsors, learn more about their work, and thank them for helping make our 45th Annual Conference possible.

- **Hours:**
 - Tuesday, Oct. 20 | 12 pm – 5:30 pm
 - Wednesday, Oct. 21 | 7 am – 1:30 pm
- Get to know our sponsors and learn about the resources they provide to help your museum
- Visit exhibitors and partners
- Learn about services and resources
- Build relationships with our sponsors

Sponsors | Awards Banquet



Sponsors | Adams Level



Sponsors | Baker Level



Environment
& Culture
Partners



Sponsors | Glacier Level



Sponsors | St. Helens Level



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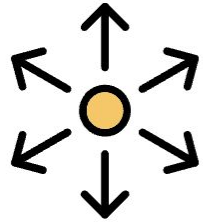
Sponsors | Olympus Level

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Sponsors | Exhibitor Level

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EDVIGORATE

Giving Back! | Registrars to the Rescue

Registrars to the Rescue (R2R) is held in conjunction with the Washington Museum Association's Annual Conference. In partnership with Art Work Fine Art Services, R2R brings together a team of experienced registrars and collections professionals to support a host museum or museums with collections projects.

Over the course of a single day, volunteers contribute their expertise to complete work that can be difficult for museums to complete with limited staff time. Projects often include inventorying collections, conducting condition reports, and rehousing objects.

Beyond the direct impact on participating museums, R2R offers a meaningful opportunity for professional collaboration, skill-sharing, and networking among peers in the field. Whether attending the full conference or joining for the day, participants gain valuable experience while strengthening connections within Washington's museum community.

For 2026, the Suquamish Museum and the Poulsbo Historical Museum are participating in R2R. Advanced application required to participate.



In 2025, Volunteers processed 86 garments (assigning numbers, sewing tags, taking photographs, and rehousing).

Things to Do | Bainbridge

To Do:

- Bainbridge Island Museum of Art
- Bainbridge History Museum
- Bainbridge Island Japanese Exclusion Memorial (NPS)
- Bloedel Reserve

Food:

- Town & Country Market (Hot Bar)
- Hitchcock & Bruciato
- Ba|Sa
- Market Elevated

Things to Do | Suquamish

To Do:

- Suquamish Museum [open Wednesday - Friday]
- Angeline Spa at Clearwater Resort
- Old Man House Park interpretive signs

Food:

- Sully's Bistro
- Clearwater Resort (several restaurant options)

Getting to Suquamish | Bainbridge

Taking the ferry? Make sure you download the Ferry Friend app!

Not a fan of apps? Ferry routes:

- [Seattle | Bainbridge Ferry Schedule](#)
- [Edmonds | Kingston Ferry Schedule](#)
- [Fauntleroy | Southworth Ferry Schedule](#)

Want to bypass the ferry? Take the scenic route and avoid taking the ferry via the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (toll) and make your way through Silverdale and Poulsbo.

Monday | October 19, 2026 | Workshops

Registrars to the Rescue (R2R) | Pre-registration required

Concurrent Workshops [Pre-purchased tickets required] | 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Workshop 1: Mount Making for Museum Exhibition: Introduction to Theory and Practice

- Bainbridge Museum of Art | Classroom | 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Workshop 2: Museum Kits that Work: Research-Based Strategies for Hands-on Inquiry

- Bainbridge Museum of Art | Auditorium | 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Workshop 3: Meeting Your Community Where They Are

- Bainbridge Performing Arts | Classroom | 200 Madison Ave N, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Workshop 4: The Power of Place Starts Within: Leading Grounded, Resilient Institutions

- Daisy Lane | Classroom | **710 John Nelson Lane, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110**

Monday | October 19, 2026 | Workshops

Concurrent Workshops [Pre-purchased tickets required] | 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Workshop 5: Creating a Seat at the Table, Practical Methods of Inclusion

- Bainbridge Museum of Art | Auditorium | 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Workshop 6: Planning for People: Why Logistics are Critical for Community Engagement

- Daisy Lane | Classroom | [710 John Nelson Lane, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110](#)

Workshop 7: Cultural Access: Learning the Hard Way

- Bainbridge Museum of Art | Classroom | 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Workshop 8: Reclaiming Space: Museums, Memory, and Community Responsibility

- Bainbridge Performing Arts | Classroom | 200 Madison Ave N, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Monday | October 19, 2026 | Tour Schedule

Suquamish Museum Tours [Pre-purchased tickets required]

- Tour 1: 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm
- Tour 2: 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- Location: 6861 NE South St, Suquamish, WA 98392

Bainbridge Island Japanese Exclusion Memorial (NPS) Tour [Pre-purchased tickets required]

- Tour: 11:00 am - 12:15 pm
- Location: 4195 Eagle Harbor Dr NE, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Self Guided Walking Tour [no cost] between 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

- Start at the Bainbridge Island Museum of Art
 - Bainbridge History Museum
 - Kids Discovery Museum
 - Daisy Lane

Monday | October 19, 2026 | Kick-Off Party

Kick-off Party | Bainbridge Island Museum of Art | 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Kick off the WaMA Conference at BIMA with drinks, tasty snacks, great music, and plenty of opportunities to connect. Come relax, mingle, and start the conference with good conversation and good company!



Address: 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Tuesday | October 20, 2026 | Keynote

House of Awakened Culture | 8 am

- Breakfast Buffet & networking

Welcome & Keynote | 9:30 am - 11:30 am

How can museums create more authentic, meaningful representations of Native peoples? Mary Jane Topash (Tulalip Tribes) and Devin Leatherman will share the story behind the Burke Museum's new *Native Peoples of the Mid-Columbia Plateau* Burke Box, developed in consultation and collaboration with the Kalispel, Spokane, Colville, and Coeur d'Alene Tribes.

The keynote explores the importance of engaging Tribal communities from the beginning and what becomes possible when museums create resources *with* communities.



TRANSITION BACK TO CLEARWATER RESORT | 11:30 am - 12:15 pm

Directions | House of Awakened Culture

The Suquamish Tribe has graciously welcomed WaMA to gather at the House of Awakened Culture for breakfast and the Keynote Address on Tuesday, October 20, 2026.

- Breakfast | 8 am
- Welcome & Keynote | 9:30 am

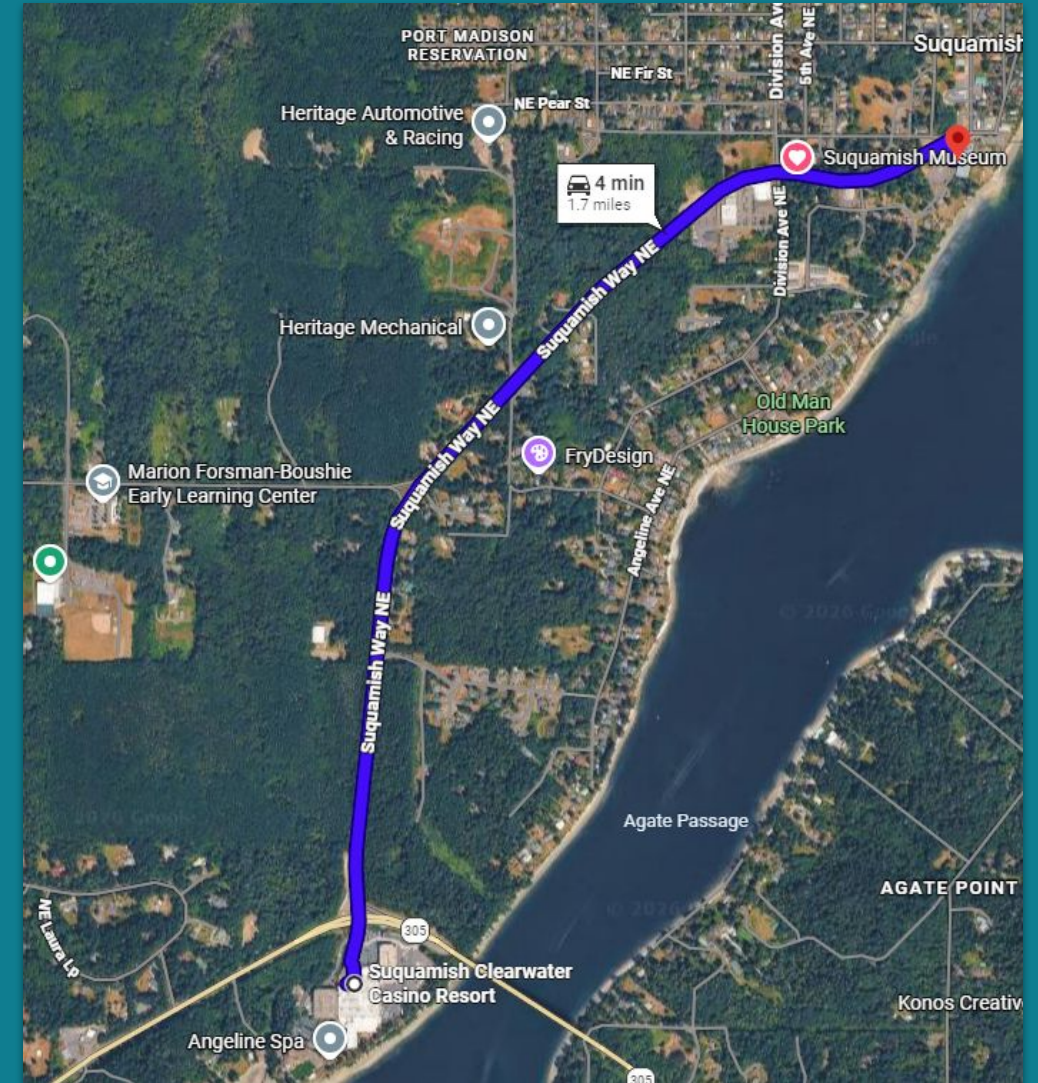
Transition back to Clearwater Resort | 11:30 am - 12:15 pm

House of Awakened Culture Address

7235 NE Parkway, Suquamish, WA 98392

Directions from the Clearwater Resort:

- Head toward WA-305 S [1.7 mi]
- Turn right onto Hyak Ln NE
- Destination will be on the left [151 ft]



Parking | House of Awakened Culture

The House of Awakened Culture has three parking areas.

Parking can also be found at the Suquamish Museum, with a short walk down hill.

Want to carpool? We have created a Carpool connector to facilitated ride sharing.



Tuesday | October 20, 2026 | Conference Schedule

TRANSITION to Clearwater Resort 11:30 am - 12:15 pm

Advocacy Luncheon | 12:15 pm - 1:15 pm

Exhibit Hall Opens | Clearwater Resort | 12:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Breakout Sessions | 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Breakout Sessions | 2:45 pm – 3:45 pm

Breakout Sessions | 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

EMP Mixer | Salmon Room | 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm |

- Purchase a drink from the Casino Bar, light refreshments will be available

Awards Banquet Dinner | Pre-registration required | Whale Hall | 6:15 pm – 8:15 pm

- Limit tickets will be available onsite to purchase

Mingle at the firepit [weather permitting] | 8:30 pm

Tuesday | October 20, 2026 | Awards Banquet

Awards Banquet Dinner | Pre-registration required | Whale Hall | 6:15 pm – 8:15 pm

Limit tickets will be available onsite to purchase

Join us as we celebrate this year's **Awards of Excellence** recipients, recognizing outstanding **Exhibits, Individual contributions, and the new Creative Economy Award**.

We'll also be honored by storytelling from **Suquamish Tribal Elder, historian, and education outreach specialist Barbara Lawrence**, whose groundbreaking work developing the [Suquamish Since Time Immemorial Curriculum](#) for middle and high schools has received national attention. Come celebrate the people and stories that **strengthen and connect Washington's museum and heritage community**.

Ticket Prices: \$85 [members] | \$115 [non-members]

Plated dinner options:

- Wild Mushroom Ravioli [Vegetarian option] - Mushroom Stuffed Ravioli in Butternut Squash Cream Sauce
- Roasted Salmon with Lemon Dill Beurre Blanc
- Chicken Saltimbocca - Chicken Breast wrapped in Prosciutto with White Wine and Sage Sauce

Each plate comes with a Spring Berry Salad, Garlic Mash Potatoes, Vanilla Bene Creme Brulee and one drink ticket.

Additional drinks will be available to purchase

Parking | Clearwater Resort

Parking Garage

Conference Hall (Second Floor)

Hotel Tower Entrance (Tower Rooms)

Resort Rooms

The Conference Hall is on the second floor of the Hotel Tower. It is accessible through the Casino [smokeless] and through the Hotel Tower entrance.



Firepit

[Tuesday night meet-up, weather permitting]

Wednesday | October 19, 2026 | Conference Schedule

Exhibit Hall Opens | 7 am

Heritage Breakfast [buffet] | Whale Hall | 7:30 am - 8:45 am

- **WSHS presentation | 8:00 am**

Breakout Sessions | 9:00 am - 10:00 am

Breakout Session | 10:15 am – 11:15 am

Annual Meeting Lunch | Whale Hall | 11:30 am -1:30 pm

Exhibit Hall Closes | 1:30 pm

Networking Opportunities

Sunday

- **WaMA No-Host Dinner** | Clearwater Resort | 6:30 pm | Join colleagues for an informal dinner
 - [Sign up here](#)

Monday

- **Tours** | Pre-registration required | A great way to see a bit of the local area while getting to know some of your fellow museum workers.
 - Suquamish Museum Tour
 - Bainbridge Island Japanese Exclusion Memorial Tour
- **Self Guided Winslow Walking Tour** | Start at Bainbridge Museum of Art | 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm
- **Welcome Party** | The official kick-off reception
 - Bainbridge Island Museum of Art | 5:30 – 7:30pm | 550 Winslow Way E, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Tuesday

- **Emerging Museum Professionals [EMP] Mixer** | **Salmon Room** | 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm
- **Awards Banquet & Dinner** | Pre-purchased tickets required | Clearwater Resort | Whale Room | 6:15 pm – 8:15 pm
- **Mingle at the Firepit** | 8:30pm | Grab your favorite drink and mingle

Meals

Tuesday:

- **Breakfast*** | House of Awakened Culture
- **Advocacy Lunch*** | Clearwater Resort | WaMA leadership will give an update on advocacy.
- **Awards Dinner** | Clearwater Resort | Join us to celebrate our 2026 awardees.
[Pre-purchased tickets required]

Wednesday:

- **Heritage Breakfast*** | Clearwater Resort | Our friends with the Washington State Historical Society will share news & updates.
- **Membership Lunch*** | Clearwater Resort | WaMA leadership will give an update on the association.

* These meals are included in the conference registration ticket price, we ask that you pick up the lunch option that you choose when registering for the conference [a label will be placed on the back of your name badge with your selections].

About WaMA

The Washington Museum Association (WaMA) was founded in 1981 to support and connect museums across Washington State. For more than four decades, WaMA has served as a statewide network for museum professionals, volunteers, students, and cultural organizations, providing opportunities for professional development, collaboration, advocacy, and resource sharing.

Now celebrating its 45th Annual Conference, WaMA continues to champion museums as vital community partners in education, preservation, storytelling, and civic life.

contact@washingtonmuseumassociation.org | PO Box 295, Wilbur WA 99185

