THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 3007 S.D. 1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO CULTURE AND ARTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that government projects and programs serve a vital purpose and exist to meet the needs of the people they serve. However, those programs are commonly measured solely based on their immediate monetary or measurable impact, neglecting the public value of innovative, creative, but often immeasurable or intangible factors that can meaningfully improve experiences and outcomes for the general public, elevating the overall value of government projects or programs.

For example, one airport switched to fully electric automated lawn mowers to mow runways. While it costs the same as employing a person, the mowers run constantly, keeping the grass shorter which reduced the number of bugs in the area. This in turn reduced the number of birds and aircraft bird strikes, unexpectedly saving millions of dollars in avoided damages, and likely lives. The automated lawn mowers were also programmed to write messages into the runway grass to welcome landing visitors, making for a memorable landing.

Some states, including Hawaii, have begun experimenting with creative messages on road signs that add interesting humor to otherwise mundane text. In other places standard audio announcements have been replaced by comedians recording witty commentary that more effectively reaches listeners and has successfully got people to pay closer attention to public messaging.

In other examples, states have begun to add creative improvements to public infrastructure. Rather than stressful queues at places such as DMVs and airport security lines, some have been transformed into interesting experiences. In one case, those in line at an airport pass through a floor-to-ceiling aquarium. In another, lines pass through passages adorned with LED panels on the walls and ceiling that display nature videos, transforming boredom into a near 360-degree immersive relaxing experience. Staff report higher customers satisfaction, fewer instances of anger and physical violence, and now process more customers per hour.

Some public libraries have been themed to fictional locations, enabling patrons to discover a science fiction section modeled according to Jules Verne's Nautilus submarine

from *20,000 Leagues under the Sea* or a history section themed like a sitting room on the Titanic. These libraries have seen public attendance and use spike after these renovations.

The legislature further finds that an entity with the right expertise dedicated to improving the innovative and creative value of government projects and services would support the State in better fulfilling its duties.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish the office of creative innovation to seek out the best examples of success projects, programs, and ideas from other states and countries; assist state agencies with creative and innovative strategies to improve their projects and programs; and execute new projects to add value for public facilities, services, and communities.

SECTION 2. Chapter 9, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new part to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"PART . OFFICE OF CREATIVE INNOVATION

§9-A Definitions. As used in this part:

"Office" means the office of creative innovation established pursuant to section 9-B.

"Executive director" means the executive director of the office of creative innovation, appointed pursuant to section 9-B(b).

§9-B Office of creative innovation; established; executive director. (a) There is established an office of creative innovation within the foundation for administrative purposes only.

(b) The office shall be headed by an executive director who shall be appointed by the governor without regard to chapter 76. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), this exemption from chapter 76 shall not expire.

(c) The executive director may employ staff for the office without regard to chapters 76 and 89; provided that the staff shall be members of the state employees' retirement system and shall be eligible to receive the benefits of any state employee benefit program generally applicable to officers and employees of the State. Notwithstanding section 76-16(b)(17), the exemption from chapter 76 shall not expire.

(d) Department heads may assign additional employees from existing positions within their departments to the office; provided that the employees shall represent their respective

department's needs, assist other departments, or otherwise support the needs of the office during the course of their assignment with the office.

(e) The office may contract for the provision of programs and services.

§9-C Office of creative innovation; functions and duties. The office shall:

(1) Execute projects and programs as directed by the governor and legislature;

(2) Support and assist all state departments and agencies with creative and innovative improvements that add creative value to their projects, programs, and endeavors;

(3) Develop creative and innovative projects, programs, and endeavors to add value to quality of life, pilot new approaches, and pursue alternative or nontraditional measures; and

(4) Identify creative and innovative best practices used by other jurisdictions, assess their value to the State, and innovate accordingly.

§9-D Annual report. The office shall submit an annual report summarizing its activities during the preceding year to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The report shall include:

(1) Creative and innovative strategies employed by other jurisdictions that the office has identified that may have potential benefit for the State;

(2) Funds received and expended for the activities of the office from federal, state, private, and philanthropic sources;

(3) The office's programs and activities throughout the year;

(4) Plans and direction the coming year; and

(5) Any other findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation."

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the establishment of:

(1) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) executive director position, exempt from chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes;

(2) One full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) specialist position; and

(3) Other expenses.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the state foundation on culture and the arts for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. In codifying the new sections added by section 2 of this Act, the revisor of statutes shall substitute appropriate section numbers for the letters used in designating the new sections in this Act.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

S.B. NO. 3007 S.D. 1

Report Title:
Foundation on Culture and the Arts; Office of Creative Innovation; Establishment; Positions; Reports; Appropriation

Description:
Establishes the Office of Creative Innovation within the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts for administrative purposes only. Requires annual reports to the Legislature. Appropriates funds for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Executive Director position and one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Specialist position within the Office of Creative Innovation. Effective 7/1/2026. (SD1)

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