

# /// STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

ArtsWorcester was fortunate that its previous strategic plan was completed in 2020, when so many projects and expectations were derailed. As intended, that plan established ArtsWorcester in a beautiful permanent home with new levels of financial sustainability, providing high-quality, vibrant contemporary art for the public and meaningful experiences for artists—and, as it turned out, with the capacity to take historic challenges as opportunities.

While this particular plan involves necessary financial growth, it does not involve significant changes in programming or direction. It focuses on *deepening and sustaining* our work in this region, making our programs more inclusive and responsive, and taking a longer view of how we serve many communities: artists, gallery-goers, collectors, students, downtown businesses, and arts workers, those of today and tomorrow.

The planning process, guided by consultants from ESC (Empower Success Corps), involved considerable time listening to voices from those constituencies, both those inside and outside the organization. We hosted several focus groups, interviewed key stakeholders, and ran online surveys of artists across the region. Those conversations began with this plan's big question: in a different landscape and with new opportunities, should ArtsWorcester remain an open membership organization, serving all artists at all stages of their work? Or should we tighten our focus, perhaps on more advanced artists?

The response was nearly unanimous: remain open to all artists. The clarity with which that opinion was delivered testified to the value of our programs over time, their impact in this city and the region, and the unique nature of this organization among other New England art centers. Simultaneously, however, we were also charged to continue the competitive professional opportunities that advance the careers of select individual artists. These two responsibilities—effectively two different but overlapping sets of programs—commit us to serving this region's artists broadly, rather than as deeply as we sometimes wish.

That said, when we produce large group exhibitions, artists tell us that size limits on artworks can be frustrating—but also that such limits spur creativity and new approaches. The strategic goals and tactics of this plan also embrace productive tensions. With them, we work towards a truly inclusive approach to a large and diverse artistic community, finding ways to advance individuals while promoting the greater good of all artists, continuing to innovate within the strictures of a small organization, and strengthening the many forms of support that make all this possible.

- **Kristina Wilson**, Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair
- **Ryan Hacker**, Board President and Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair
- **Juliet Feibel**, Executive Director

*We thank the members of the Strategic Planning Committee:*

Nancy Burns	Scarlett Hoey
Vanessa Calixto	Timmary Leary
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Alice Dillon	Tony Vaver
Jennifer Irvine	



**/// MISSION:** to engage artists and the public to advance and celebrate contemporary art.

**/// VISION:** to serve as a pivotal center for contemporary art in New England.

### **/// STRATEGIC GOALS:**

#### **Embrace New Communities and New Artwork**

*Dedicated staff will create new community partnerships and programs to achieve greater diversity in the people involved in ArtsWorcester and the artwork exhibited there.*

- Stabilize and strengthen staff positions
- Establish new models for programming
- Develop youth career development program

#### **Grow a Culture of Support in Worcester**

*New strategies will be developed to create stronger connections and increased support among households, businesses, and art collectors.*

- Increase number of contributing households
- Increase households making multi-year commitments of major support
- Create new entry for planned giving
- Increase corporate support
- Cultivate art buying

#### **Strengthen Financial Stability**

*To achieve its ambitious goals, ArtsWorcester will increase resources, skills, and capacity to find new funding.*

- Create fundraising plan to support strategies above
- Increase multi-year commitments from foundation supporters
- Enhance fundraising capacity
- Engage in formal and strategic marketing of corporate art rentals

#### **Deepen Board Engagement and Effectiveness**

*Strategies to grow board members' knowledge, skills, and interest in supporting ArtsWorcester will strengthen their efficacy and impact.*

- Improve education and training on ambassadorship and fundraising responsibilities
- Deepen board knowledge of organization's work
- Align service to professional and personal interests

*This planning process took place in partnership with the Empower Success Corps, and with support from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation and the Stoddard Charitable Trust.*



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