

aceartinc.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2024

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WHO WE ARE

Vision

aceartinc. is a space for creative expression, collaboration and idea sharing, characterized by play, openness to new ideas and perspectives. We are always evolving, learning as a community, and serving as a community gathering space.

We envision creating a diverse, mature and nurturing arts community in which artists can feel free to express themselves and receive constructive feedback.

We strive to:

- Create a space for everyone to participate in the conversation
- Facilitate growth and practice discernment in situations of conflict

Mission

aceartinc. is dedicated to the support of emerging artists. We foster a diverse and demystified dialogue around contemporary art. aceartinc. is a space for emerging creatives to exhibit, collaborate, interrogate, network, and receive mentorship with and from the community.

Mandate

Space: To maintain a physically accessible space, open to the public, where the exploration of ideas surrounding contemporary art are interrogated through exhibition, events, critical writing, and dialogue.

Art: To support the development, production and exhibition of contemporary art by local and national artists at all stages of their careers, with a focus on emerging artists and artists who have not presented in a solo exhibition before.

Professional Development: To provide concrete opportunities for the professional development of artists, writers, curators, gallery workers, volunteers and members.

Resources: To facilitate artistic research and development by making available the resources, library and archives of the centre.

Dissemination: To communicate aceartinc.'s activities and programs locally, nationally and internationally through press release, invitation, and dissemination of educational and critical materials.

Dialogue: To provide a forum for dialogue and new ideas in contemporary art.

Curation and Peer Adjudication: To be proactive in achieving programming goals by balancing peer adjudication with curation.

Community Relations: To ensure a strong connection with the Winnipeg Arts community and the local community through our willingness to partner with individuals, groups and other organizations.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Celebrating our strengths. Being mindful of challenges.

As an organisation, aceartinc. has a number of strengths to draw from as we move into 2022. As an organisation, we are self-reflective and strive to continually improve. The former Board of Directors resigned in response to a local community call-out to make space for new leadership . As of January 2022, with the exception of one Director to provide historic institutional context, the Board consists of new Directors dedicated to seeing aceartinc. thrive.

Key strengths of aceartinc. include our committed staff who are not afraid to take risks when necessary. aceartinc. has a strong exhibition history and has developed relationships with other organisations, festivals, and community members. We are committed to giving space to emerging artists and allowing a wide variety of voices to be heard. Furthermore we have a unique opportunity to start fresh in a new building and gallery space as the city begins to re-open with the easing of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

While we recognize and celebrate our strengths, we are also mindful of our key challenges as we move forward.

One crucial challenge is Human Resources as we are currently without staff or board members with expertise in this area. Additionally, we are presently without a staff person in the Program Director role to implement the 3-year programming plan and apply for related funding. Finally, construction delays in the new building restrict our ability to present programming.

Potential future opportunities

Our new location will invite many different opportunities. The new gallery space will be more physically accessible and will draw additional membership. While the absence of a diversified funding base is currently a weakness, fundraising for the new building has introduced us to a wide range of potential donors.

Our new programming, strategic plan and vision will help us to build more meaningful partnerships and regain community trust.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

aceartinc. launched a strategic planning process in the fall of 2021 through a three-day facilitated strategic planning session with the Board and staff.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS

Strategic priorities and goals are guideposts on our path to achieving our mission and vision. Through the visioning and planning process, the following four (4) strategic priorities were identified:

Priorities for Action over the next 3 years

1. **Financial Stability**
2. **Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Advisory Circle**
3. **Community-based and Socially Responsive Programming**
4. **People Empowered to Handle Conflict**

Strategic Priority #1 – Financial Stability

Our Approach

Sustainable funding is essential to our work. This will require securing additional operational funding and attracting more donors and sponsors.

We need additional staff to effectively meet our goal of 3-5 full-time and 1-2 part-time staff, paid fair salaries.

To achieve this, we will:

1. Fundraising and Grants – Create a fundraising plan with strong goals. Research operational grants and network with funders.
2. Human Resources/ Programming – Get our new space finished. Develop a program plan and fuller Human Resources strategy, including surveying salaries, creating clear job descriptions, policies, processes, based on industry standards. Hire some prep staff but wait at least a year before increasing full-time staff beyond three people.
3. Develop a Clear Brand Identity – Create a solid PR strategy and recruit ambassadors for aceartinc.

Strategic Priority #2 – Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Advisory Circle

Our Approach

Building an Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Advisory Council that is community-based, self-defined, and has adequate resources will enable us to create a safer and Indigenized space that honours and respects the original caretakers of the land and the land upon which **aceartinc.** resides. This will enable us to better meet the needs of the community at large.

To achieve this, we will:

1. Recruit key Indigenous community members to lead this initiative.
2. Define structure and objectives, with a structure, size, and scope that is consistent with organisational objectives.
3. Provide adequate resources – raise funding; offer space, transportation, food, and people who can provide support.

Strategic Priority #3 – Community-based and Socially Responsive Programming

Our Approach

Hiring a Program Director will give us the capacity to partner with community organisations and address social issues, e.g. houselessness and gentrification, key issues in the immediate location of the new building and gallery space. We aim to create programming that responds to and imagines new possibilities for social change in the community.

To achieve this, we will:

1. Hire a Program Director to write a curatorial project that fits with this vision – flesh out a full curatorial vision and a plan for how this fits into it (3-5 years). We envision this being a special project of our broader vision.
2. Partner with organisations and community groups who are involved in social issues impacting the surrounding area.
3. Directly support those organisations (instead of just having exhibitions about houselessness).
4. Hire prep staff from the community to set up exhibitions on a contract basis, which can lead to permanent employment in the long term.

Strategic Priority #4 – People Empowered to Handle Conflict

Our Approach

Training our staff and the Board to handle conflict and respect that not everyone will like what we do will empower people in our organization. Creating a meeting methodology for town-hall meetings and ensuring our social media is safe will allow us to manage conflict when it occurs.

To achieve this, we will:

1. Provide staff and Board with mediation training.
 - a. Find resources for conflict-management training.
 - Fundraise to support training and skills development
 - Dedicate budget line for training
 - Get to know specialists in the area
 - b. Provide trauma-informed training for staff, Board, and volunteers.
 - Ensure understanding that everyone brings their own experiences
 - Provide training on unconscious bias
2. Develop strong policies for managing conflict.
 - a. HR consultant – hire a consultant to help create an HR policy.
 - b. Create and post an Anti-harassment policy that addresses social media (more transparency).
 - c. Ensure Board collaborates with and supports staff in handling future differences.
3. Provide more communication and avenues for feedback from the community (e.g., townhall, long tables, not exclusively social media).

STRATEGIC PLAN ROAD MAP

Strategic Plan Priorities and Goals		Key Performance Indicators – How We Measure Success		
	Short-Term Target – Year 1	Long-Term Target – Year 3	Lead Responsible Partnerships Resources Needed	Start – Completion Date
Strategic Priority #1 - Financial Stability	Sustainable funding is essential to our work. This will require securing additional operational funding and attracting more donors and sponsors. We need additional staff to effectively meet our goal of mandate: 3-5 full-time and 1-2 part-time staff, paid fair salaries			
1. Fundraising and Grants – Create a fundraising plan with strong goals, research operational and project grants, and network with funders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developed relationships with funders and private donors ● One party/ dinner/ formal fundraising event ● Increased grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secured additional operational funding ● Database of donors ● Fundraising party is an annually anticipated event ● More project funding from diverse sources ● Accessed funding for our educational programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director of Finance and Administration with support of Treasurer/Finance Committee ● CCA, MAC, WAC, Winnipeg Foundation, Canada Life, Investors Group, Federal Government education and job training programs ● Staff time 	Now – Ongoing
2. Human Resources / Programming – Get our new space finished. Develop a program plan and fuller Human Resources strategy, including surveying salaries, clear job descriptions, policies, processes, based on industry standards Have some prep staff but wait at least a year before increasing full-time staff beyond three people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contracted prep staff ● Happy staff ● High morale ● Conducted a survey of salaries ● Revised job descriptions ● Revised HR policies and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permanent prep staff ● Benefits plan ● Pension plan ● Full-time 3rd position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director of Finance and Administration ● HR Consultant 	Now – Ongoing

3. Develop a Clear Brand/ Identity – Create a solid PR strategy and recruit ambassadors for aceartinc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a strong curatorial vision Curator conducting studio visits with emerging artists Developed educational programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People know our story Self-reliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Director Graphic Designer 	Once Program Director is hired – Ongoing
	Short-Term Target – Year 1	Long-Term Target – Year 3	Lead Responsible Partnerships Resources Needed	Start – Completion Date
Strategic Priority #2 – Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Advisory Circle	Building an and Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers Advisory Council that is community-based, self-defined, and has adequate resources will enable us to create a safer and Indigenized space that honours and respects the original caretakers of the land and the land upon which aceartinc. resides. This will enable us to better meet the needs of the community at large.			
1. Recruit key Indigenous community members to lead this initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified key community members/leaders representing the diverse Indigenous Nations of the territory colonially known as Winnipeg. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board 	
2. Define a -structure and objectives, with a structure, size, and scope that is consistent with organisational objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determined structure and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circle has had a positive impact on the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board 	Now – Ongoing
3. Provide adequate resources – apply for funding; offer space, transportation, food, and people who can provide support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed research for resources Secured funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become a stabilizing program for aceartinc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board and Staff Potential Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Curatorial Collective Beading Babes A Board or staff member to be the main contact for the Circle 	Once our vision is complete – an ongoing partnership

	Short-Term Target – Year 1	Long-Term Target - Year 3	Lead Responsible Partnerships Resources Needed	Start - Completion Date
Strategic Priority #3 – Community-based and Socially Responsive Programming	Hiring a Program Director will give us the capacity to partner with community organisations and address social issues, e.g. houselessness and gentrification- key issues in the immediate location of the new building and gallery space. We hope to create programming that responds to and imagines new possibilities for social change in the community.			
1. Hire a Program Director to write a curatorial project that fits with this vision – flesh out a curatorial vision, need a full curatorial vision and a plan for how this fits into it (3 – 5 years). A special project of our broader vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a Program Director in a permanent position • The 3-year plan has been written • Reached out to some artists • 1 year of the 3-year plan has been scheduled • Received a Canada Council grant (or other project funding) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews/ features published about the shows (Akimbo, APTN, Border Crossings) • Publication has been attached to the project – Paperwait could pivot a special project catalogue – disseminating the idea of the art project (adds to art discourse) • Records of shows have gone to the National Archive • Shown 3 – 6 shows related to this project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Director • Research • Housing organisations • Shelters • University departments • Immigration/ settlement organisations 	Once the Program Director has been hired, 3 – 4 years 1-year start time
2. Partner with organisations and community groups who are involved in social issues impacting the surrounding area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified partner organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong working relationship featuring events, exhibitions, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and Program Director 	Once Program Director is hired and vision is solidified, ongoing

<p>3. Directly support those organisations in the neighbourhood (instead of just having exhibitions about houselessness).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff is part of the local community (North Exchange) ● Board and staff supporting and collaborating with local organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular events held to support and promote local organisations, e.g, food drives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board and Staff 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>4. Hire prep staff from the community to set up exhibitions on a contract basis, which can lead to permanent employment in the long term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contract employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Permanent employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Program Director 	

Strategic Priority #4 – People Empowered to Handle Conflict

	Short-Term Target – Year 1	Long-Term target - Year 3	Lead Responsible Partnerships Resources Needed	Start - Completion Date
<p>Strategic Priority #4 – People Empowered to Handle Conflict</p>	<p>Training staff and Board to handle conflict and respect that not everyone will like what we do will empower people in our organization. Creating a meeting methodology for town-hall meetings and ensuring our social media is well-managed and safe will allow the organisation to manage conflict when it occurs.</p>			
<p>1. Provide staff with mediation training.</p> <p>a. Find resources for conflict-management training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fundraise to support training and skills development ● Dedicate a budget line for training ● Get to know specialists in the area <p>b. Provide trauma-informed training for staff, Board, and volunteers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All staff and Board confident in conflict resolution methods ● Safer social media ● Better equipped for communication with the community ● Healthy morale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community supports us ● Healed breach with community ● Other organisations will ask us for help ● Self-sustained part of our ecosystem ● Established a committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Director of Finance and Administration ● Consultants ● Training ● All of us ● Arts community 	<p>Ongoing for new staff and Board</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure understanding that everyone brings their own experiences. • Provide training on unconscious bias. 				
<p>2. Develop strong policies for managing conflict.</p> <p>a. HR consultant – hire consultant to create HR policy</p> <p>b. Create an Harassment Policy that addresses social media (more transparency)</p> <p>c. Ensure Board collaborates with and supports staff in handling future differences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a relationship with a Human Resources consultant • HR Policy is written and approved by Board • Harassment Policy created • Staff training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Policy reviewed after 3 years • Harassment Policy reviewed after 3 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Finance and Administration • Board • Consultants 	<p>ASAP, reviewed every 3 years</p>
<p>3. Provide more communication and avenues for feedback from the community (e.g., townhall, long tables, not social media)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held 1 – 3 meetings with the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure with community established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board and Staff 	<p>Now and ongoing</p>