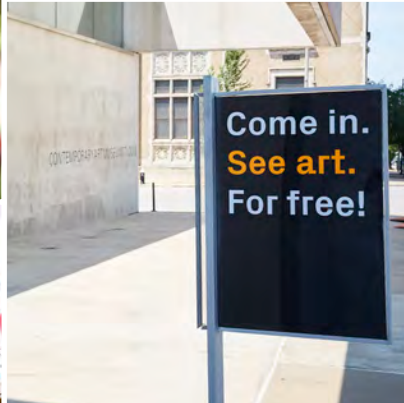


Advocate Partner Catalyst

A Strategic Plan to Strengthen RAC's
Leadership Role in the St. Louis Region



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To review any of the reports referenced in this plan, please visit racstl.org

DEAR PARTNERS IN ARTS & CULTURE

This document maps out a strategic plan for the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis (RAC) for the next five years, 2020-2024.

The plan is rooted in a thorough community listening process, EVOKE, that was conducted in 2017 and that gathered input from hundreds of residents of the St. Louis region.

Throughout the development process, we focused on a few key questions:

How can RAC best serve and support the arts and culture sector in St. Louis, and in so doing, best serve the St. Louis region?

What is the highest and best use of the platform RAC has been given, and the community resources with which RAC has been entrusted?

What roles should RAC play in the future, and how can we achieve this vision?

This document helps explain how we arrived at answers to these questions, and what those answers mean for RAC and for you. We want you to know not only the priorities of the strategy, but the foundation on which that strategy is built.

Thus, the document focuses on the big picture – it is not a detailed breakdown of specific tactics. Because RAC has for so long been seen by so many as primarily a source of funding for the arts, we know that many people reading this will be wondering how this strategy might impact their funding. That is a reasonable thing to ask, and to be clear, grantmaking will remain at the core of our work. Our grantmaking will remain, but in time there will be changes influenced by RAC's new priorities.

This strategic plan describes how we will shift our emphasis, broaden our focus, and direct the efforts of RAC for the future. This document is not intended to answer specific funding questions, but rather more existential questions – What will RAC be in five years? How will RAC be a positive influence on the entire arts and culture sector? How will RAC approach this work?

We're focused on those broader questions because we heard your call for RAC to evolve into an arts champion with not only the resources to support arts and culture in the region, but also the platform from which to influence the regional conversation about arts and culture, and the will and persistence to bring people together to do the work.

For the arts and culture sector in St. Louis to grow and thrive, RAC must be more than just a funder of arts and culture – it must be a leader, an advocate, and a true partner with arts and culture organizations and individual artists, and a catalyst for change in the arts and culture sector.

That’s why the strategic planning process focused on how RAC could become that advocate, partner, and catalyst – how we could expand RAC’s role in the region.

We are ready and eager to rise to that challenge, and we are confident we can do it.

But we cannot do it alone.

For the strategy we have mapped out here to not only be implemented, but to succeed, it must be a process of co-creation. In many cases, we may need to be the organization to jump-start the work, but for sustained success, we need community partners like you to contribute your energy, your ideas, your feedback, your time, and yes, your resources. We need partners from every corner and every sector of the region, from arts organizations to individual artists, from government officials to business leaders, from educators to everyday St. Louisans.

A thriving arts and culture sector benefits all of us – and needs all of us.

We hope you will join us on this next phase of the journey.

In Partnership,



MONT LEVY

CHAIR

**REGIONAL ARTS
COMMISSION
OF ST. LOUIS**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



A brief overview of the strategic plan is presented here. For more details about each section, as well as the context for the strategic plan priorities and framework, please read this document in full.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES

We have developed four priorities for the strategic plan:

GROW AND DEVELOP CAPACITY OF ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

This strategy will focus on arts management training for small-budget and mid-sized nonprofit arts and culture organizations, as well as individual artists. The goal of this strategy is to create healthy, growing organizations and communities of artists that achieve a diversity of revenue sources.

ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS

The goal of this strategy is to meaningfully increase exposure and access to arts education for every child, in every school, through collaborative programming.

INCREASE EQUITY IN THE ARTS THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

This focus, designed to increase access to the arts through leadership and collaboration, will focus on supporting arts and culture organizations in a variety of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, and providing targeted management and infrastructure support for organizations of color.

STRENGTHEN KEY ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to support this ambitious work, we know we must have a strong organizational infrastructure in place. There are three key areas – all of which support all of our other priorities – where we will focus our attention, energy, and resources: grantmaking, technology and data, and management and governance.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

These priorities will be supported by a strategic plan framework built on RAC's enabling purpose "to promote, encourage, and foster the arts and cultural institutions within the district." This framework includes a new Mission Statement, Core Values, Guiding Principles, and Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Regional Arts Commission.

RAC MISSION STATEMENT

As the leading public catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis, the Regional Arts Commission leverages the power of creativity to strengthen and enrich our community.

RAC CORE VALUES

Our core values embody our culture, spirit, and dedication to living our mission. They keep us grounded and help us make good decisions about everything we do.

We are:

- + Passionate champions for arts and culture.
- + Accountable stewards of the public trust.
- + Committed to practices that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- + Socially and civically engaged community catalysts.
- + Servant leaders.

RAC GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are an investor in the arts and artists.

We will prioritize quality in all that we do.

We believe that equity is an urgent and necessary priority.

We believe that every child deserves a well-rounded education that includes the arts.

We will promote partnerships to strengthen the sector.

STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

To ensure a full creative life for every St. Louisan, the Regional Arts Commission commits to champion policies and practices that promote diversity, racial equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the arts.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Over this five-year period, 2020-2024, RAC will fulfill its new mission by leveraging the myriad resources of St. Louis and RAC's unique convening power to create a vital, sustainable, and diverse arts sector.

RAC will remain a key grantmaker in the arts, revising its annual grantmaking program to ensure that it aligns with RAC's strategic priorities. This core programming will be complemented by a set of projects and initiatives that address the concerns raised in the environmental analysis and that allow RAC to become a true cultural hub for St. Louis.

The existing set of strategic initiative programs will be evaluated and sunset where appropriate. New programs and initiatives will be created over the coming five years to support the four strategic priorities outlined above: capacity building; arts education; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and strengthening organizational infrastructure.

Efforts will also be made to forge joint ventures and collaborations among arts institutions.

Achieving this ambitious program will require the hiring of new staff and the development of new internal systems, structures, and culture that establish RAC as a great place to work. A modest fund development operation (focused on major gifts) will provide necessary financial resources driven by the engagement of a committed and diverse board of Commissioners. One major task for the Commissioners will be to evaluate RAC's facility needs to ensure that the Commission's home supports its new portfolio of programs.



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

This timeline represents our best estimate of when work will begin and continue on the range of initiatives and supporting efforts described above.

Of course, as implementation begins, things will change. Thus, this timeline is how we envision the work happening today, in early 2020, but we know that with new leadership, new information, new developments, new ideas, new opportunities, and new partners, implementation will look different a year from now, two years from now, and beyond. But this timeline will help us align resources to get as much of this vital work done as quickly as possible.

In addition, we plan to convene our stakeholders at least once a year during the life of this five-year plan to hold ourselves accountable and to be transparent about our progress.



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

GROW AND DEVELOP CAPACITY OF ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Implement Capacity Building Program for Organizations

Initiate Artist Count II Survey

Leverage Artist Count II Survey Data for Artist Programs and Services

Develop and Implement Capacity Building Program for Individual Artists

ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS

Conduct State of the Arts Education Research

Launch and Implement Arts Education Collective Impact Initiative

INCREASE EQUITY IN THE ARTS THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Support Equity Training Programs for Arts Leadership

Evaluate Equity Training Programs for Arts Leadership

Continue to Fund and Evaluate Equity Training Programs

Optimize Pipeline for Arts Administrators of Color

Implement and Optimize Capacity Building Intensive Program for Organizations of Color

STRENGTHEN KEY ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Relaunch RAC Website

Evaluate and Optimize Strategic Initiatives Programs

Develop Regional Marketing Program to Support Arts and Culture Awareness

Develop and Implement Master Facility Plan

Optimize Grantmaking Programs



FOR MORE DETAILS ON ...

The Mission Statement, Core Values, and Guiding Principles, please turn to **p. 22**.

The Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, please turn to **p. 25**.

The priority to Grow and Develop Capacity of Artists and Arts Organizations, please turn to **p. 26**.

The priority to Advance the Education of Young People in and through the Arts, please turn to **p. 27**.

The priority to Increase Equity in the Arts through Leadership and Collaboration, please turn to **p. 27**.

The priority to Strengthen Key Organizational Infrastructure, please turn to **p. 28**.

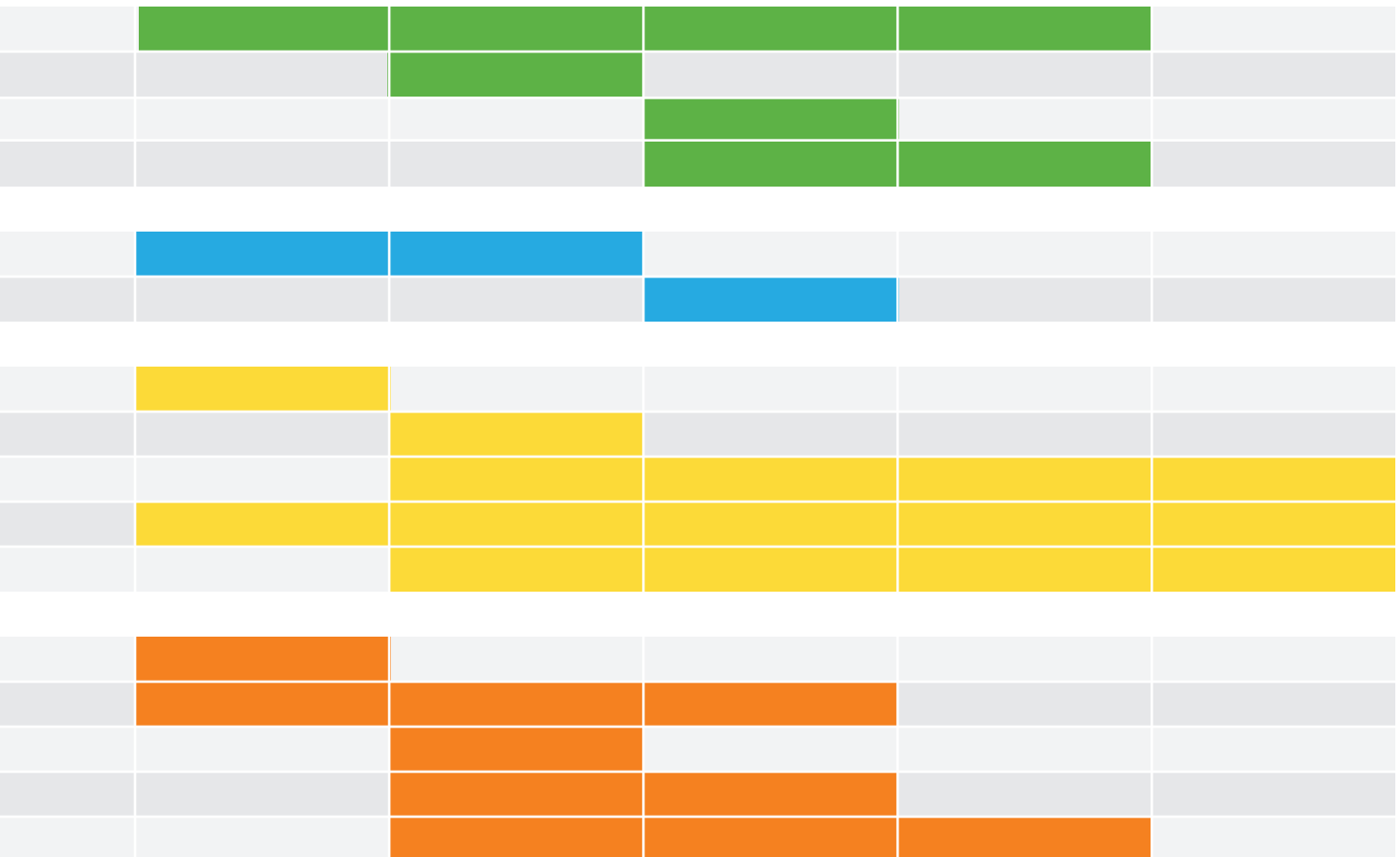
2020

2021

2022

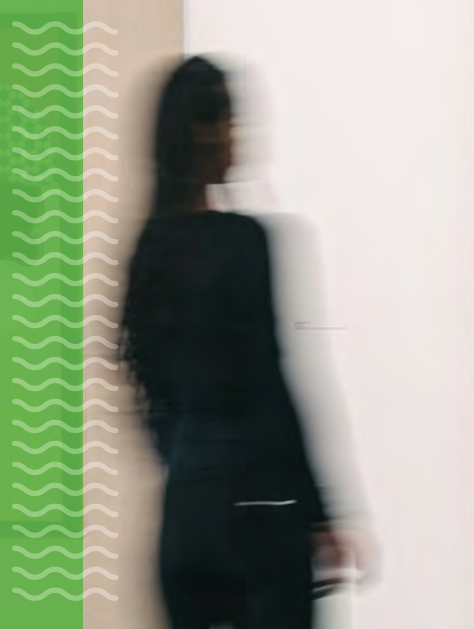
2023

2024



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

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To understand why RAC has decided to focus on the priorities and pursue the strategic plan mapped out in this document, it helps to understand how RAC – and the region – got to this point. This section presents a very brief history of RAC, as well as a review of the EVOKE process that generated the community insights and desires that created the infrastructure for this strategic plan.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RAC

The Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis (RAC) was founded in 1985, and made possible by enabling legislation that mapped out the organization’s mission and funding source. Here is the section of the House Substitute for Senate Bill 709 of the 82nd General Assembly of Missouri that articulates this mission:

AN ACT

To provide for the establishment, funding, powers, and duties of certain commissions and districts in certain cities and counties, with an emergency clause.

3. Each regional cultural and performing arts development commission is empowered to:
 - (1) Develop and implement plans, policies and programs to **promote, encourage and foster the arts and cultural institutions and activities within the district;**
 - (2) Cooperate and act jointly with other agencies, bureaus, boards, and association or corporation, or other legal entity to **promote, encourage and foster the arts and cultural institutions and activities within the district;**

- (3) Contract with any public or private agency, individual, partnership, association, corporation or other legal entity for the furnishing of services and supplies to promote, encourage and foster the arts and cultural institutions and activities within the district;
- (4) Accept grants and donations from public or private entities to promote, encourage and foster the arts and cultural institutions and activities within the district;
- (5) Fund or make grants in aid of public or private entities for the purpose of promoting, encouraging and fostering the arts and cultural institutions and activities within the district;

The final section of the bill is also worth noting here. It reads:

SECTION A. Because there is a serious and immediate need for additional funds to adequately finance the regional development of St. Louis City and St. Louis County, this act is deemed necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, welfare, peace and safety...

In other words, in passing the legislation that brought RAC into being, state legislators acknowledged the role that arts and culture play in the preservation of public health, welfare, peace, and safety. They were saying that for a community to thrive, the arts aren't a "nice to have" – they are a "need to have." With this as its charge, RAC has for nearly 35 years provided critical support to the arts organizations and artists of St. Louis. We have fulfilled our mission to promote, encourage, and foster the arts, allocating more than \$100 million in public funds to individual artists, arts organizations, and other nonprofit groups. From established institutions to innovative new projects, the investment has helped promote St. Louis' economy and developed an art and culture scene that is the envy of communities nationwide.

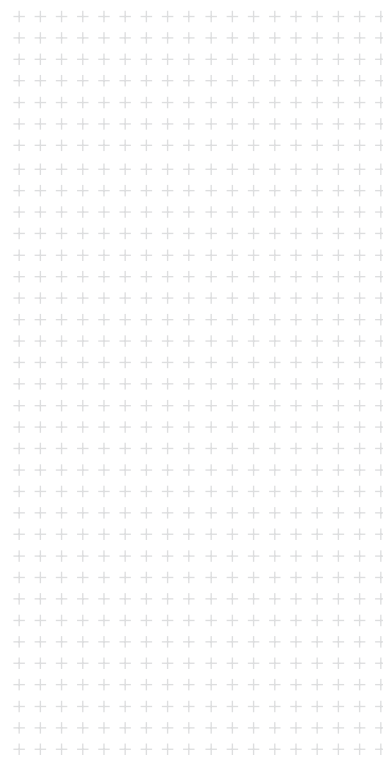
Of course, the world is quite different than it was in 1985. A new generation has grown up in an age of rapid change and new technologies that help people engage with the arts in ways unimagined 35 years ago.

Though it has remained true to its original intent and purpose, and rooted in its historical imperatives, RAC has also evolved since its founding, with further evolution necessary to keep pace with changing times.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: EVOKE

To ensure RAC was ready and able to support the arts community now and into the future, under the leadership of former Executive Director Felicia Shaw, we initiated a community listening process, called EVOKE, to help gain clarity around community priorities and use that to inform our strategic plan.

Over the course of 2017, we conducted dozens of individual interviews with community leaders, and facilitated dozens of community discussions where we heard directly from hundreds of citizens. We gathered input from artists of all disciplines, leaders of arts and culture organizations, arts funders, community organizations, and everyday St. Louisans.



We gathered data through an open online survey and through a statistically valid survey of 500 residents of St. Louis City and County and conducted an audience demand survey to determine who is and who is not being served by the arts in St. Louis.

To further ensure community voice in the development of this cultural vision, RAC convened the Thought Leaders Forum, a group of leaders and representatives from diverse sectors from across the community, including faith, health and human services, and state and municipal government, as well as arts and heritage. The Thought Leaders Forum served as an independent advisory body to oversee the planning process; explore the issues, ideas, and data emerging from the research; and consider the implications of what was learned in the development of this vision and priorities.

All of the information gathered throughout this process was reviewed, discussed, and analyzed to determine the priorities for the cultural vision.

FROM EVOKE TO ARTS &: THE SIX COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Six community priorities were identified in the EVOKE process and described in *ARTS &: A Creative Vision for St. Louis*, the report published by RAC in September 2018:

Arts Education For All

Establish arts education for all as a community-wide commitment.

Advance Equity Through the Arts

Position the arts and culture sector as a leader in advancing equity.

Amplify Arts as an Economic Engine

Amplify arts and culture as an economic engine and contributor to St. Louis' high quality of life.

Invite All St. Louisans Into Creativity

Invite all St. Louisans into creativity to advance active participation in the arts and encourage civic engagement.

Increase Support to Local Artists

Attract and retain a high-performing community of professional artists and creative entrepreneurs.

Forge New Partnerships and Collaborations

Use this vision to forge new partnerships, collaborations, and alliances





FROM ARTS & TO STRATEGIC PLAN

RAC then engaged The Rome Group, a consulting firm specializing in work with nonprofits, to work with representatives from St. Louis' individual artist and nonprofit arts sector around the question of what strategies would best move the priorities from concept to action.

Beginning in February 2019, The Rome Group team had three meetings each with three working groups, created from RAC grantees and other stakeholders, to engage with the six ARTS & priorities and provide feedback to inform the strategic plan. These working groups were:

- + Arts & Education
- + Arts & the Economy
- + Arts & the Working Artist

In addition to these three priority areas, equity and partnerships were considered by each working group as connecting themes and threaded throughout all their discussions.

THE ST. LOUIS ARTS ECOSYSTEM

The efforts of the three working groups were complemented by a separate study conducted concurrently with their work. The DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the University of Maryland was commissioned by the Centene Corporation to study the arts ecology of St. Louis. The goal of the study was to provide guidance about the needs of artists and arts organizations in St. Louis.

RAC was asked to help identify arts organizations to participate in the study. The study examined two cohorts of arts organizations: those larger organizations that receive RAC funding and smaller organizations that receive project support. In-depth interviews and data surveys were performed with 60 organizations from both cohorts.

The interviews focused on key strategic aspects of arts management: artistic planning, marketing (both to increase ticket sales and to engage new donors), fundraising, board engagement, and staffing.

Data for arts organizations in St. Louis were also compared to data from arts organizations in six comparator metro areas: Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota; Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida; Denver, Colorado; Baltimore, Maryland; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Orlando, Florida.





STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY: GROW AND DEVELOP CAPACITY OF ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS




Learning should be fun. It should feel natural and engaging. And this is the space to do it. I grew up in the City of St. Louis, seven minutes away, so this is my neighborhood. But we definitely did not have a makerspace. I wasn't even aware of what that was. I now look at my city completely different. My whole perception has changed.

Our layout is one big open studio with individual spaces that make up the Makerspace. MADE stands for Makers, Artists, Designers, and Entrepreneurs, and we have a lot of creative projects in each space. We also have a year-long series called the Visiting Artists + Maker Series. Once a month, a visiting artist comes in, and our MADE for Kids visitors have a hands-on experience with the artist or maker of that day. It gives a lot of exposure to different local artists and different expressions of art, which seems to be endless. We need places like this to keep us here and grounded and improve our hometown. It's important so we don't lose our level of creativity and wonder. Because when you're able to express yourself, you're also discovering other talents or interests that you may not even know you had.

We've been lucky to have this funding from RAC because we have so many different supplies here that will give you whatever you need to create. It helps kids develop and recognize some of the talents they have. And, ultimately, you never know. This can maybe spark a new career path for them. Just bounce off the kids when they get excited, keep your mind open, and you can do so much here.”

— MARÍ PAYNE, MADE FOR KIDS ST. LOUIS



Photography and Interview
by Lindy Drew, Humans of St. Louis

WHAT DID WE LEARN?



WHAT THE WORKING GROUPS LEARNED

The grantee working groups concluded that the St. Louis region has a strong arts and culture sector that can be made even stronger with the implementation of strategies that address:

- + Building a stronger foundation for arts education through support for teaching artists; equitable school and community-based programs; centralized resources for the public; and advocacy for funding to help ensure equity.
- + Engaging the arts with other sectors of the community, including government, to collectively develop a more creative economy by providing leadership and marketing, including data dissemination on the benefits of the arts, as well as support for organizations.
- + Developing a more robust environment for working artists by connecting, promoting, and supporting them in a variety of ways as well as promoting St. Louis as the thriving arts environment it is.

The working groups asserted that a collective effort to accomplish these strategies will benefit the entire region and help ensure a creative future.

The working groups also identified key takeaways in several areas, as described below.

WHAT'S WORKING IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION?

The St. Louis region has many strengths when it comes to the arts and culture sector, and the working groups brainstormed solutions to build on those strengths. Participants highlighted the following strengths:



Arts Education

- Arts education is mandated by the state in school districts.
- There is local public and private funding for arts education programs.
- A significant number of arts education programs are available to audiences at no cost.
- Quality instructors are delivering arts education programming across the region.
- Organizations develop partnerships to reach youth who most need access to arts education.

Arts and Economic Development

- Organizations are successfully generating earned income.
- St. Louis has many thriving arts districts.
- The region is focused on innovation.

Working Artists

- Opportunities for working artists have increased over the years.
- St. Louis is more affordable for artists compared to other markets.
- Connectivity to a community of artists is possible.
- St. Louis exports talent to other markets.

What's Working: Common Themes

Several themes and suggestions emerged from all three groups related to what is working well in the St. Louis region for the arts:

- The community landscape allows for opportunities to engage in artistic endeavor in many ways.
- St. Louis has "pockets" of excellence.
- The region has made a case for the arts as necessary for quality of life.
- Artists and arts organizations are connected to the community.

WHAT CHALLENGES DOES THE ARTS SECTOR FACE IN THE ST. LOUIS REGION?

The working groups also recognized that St. Louis faces many challenges when it comes to the arts and culture sector. Participants highlighted the following challenges:

Arts Education

- Equitable implementation of arts education in schools.
- Awareness of all available resources.
- Shortage of artists formally trained in teaching.
- Providing programs in an equitable, accessible manner.

Arts and Economic Development

- Messaging regarding arts' importance and impact.
- A stronger infrastructure on which to build capacity.
- Bridging the arts/entertainment divide.

Working Artists

- Smaller markets have limitations.
- Lack of recognition for their work.
- Storytelling about the arts is scarce.
- Lack of a central resource or database for working artists.

Challenges: Common Themes

Several themes and suggestions also emerged from the three working groups related to challenges for the arts in the region:

- Arts education is needed across the lifespan.
- Storytelling and marketing the arts must be prioritized.
- Intermediary organizations and institutions need to take stronger leadership roles.
- Integration of the arts into all aspects of the region is necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUPS: WHAT STRATEGIES WILL LEAD TO PROGRESS?

Based on the identified strengths and challenges, each working group brainstormed solutions to move the sector forward in their respective priority areas. The solutions are high-level strategies presented with the assumption that RAC, individual organizations, and individuals, as well as other funders interested in the sector, will develop the necessary tactics and/or programs to implement them.



Arts Education

- Provide systemic support for teaching artists.
- Advocate for the impact of arts education.
- Develop centralized resources for the public and those in the sector.
- Fully appropriate public funds designated for the arts.
- Develop equitable community- and school-based arts education programs.

Arts and Economic Development

- Support an arts leader (or entity) responsible for advocacy, policy, and marketing.
- Gather and leverage information and data to make the case for the arts.
- Tell the stories of how local artists and arts organizations impact life in the region.
- Influence regional government to prioritize the arts.

Working Artists

- Build the capacity of working artists.
- Invest in storytelling and messaging about the St. Louis arts scene.
- Create more paid opportunities for artists to work and exhibit.
- Develop affordable studio space and advocate for a living wage in the region.
- Value working artists in the region and celebrate and amplify their work.
- Be intentional about connecting artists with other artists.

For more detail on the learnings and recommendations of the working groups, please see the *ARTS & Next Steps: Working Groups Report*, available on racstl.org.

WHAT THE ARTS ECOLOGY STUDY FOUND

The arts ecology study, conducted by the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the University of Maryland, came to the following major conclusions:

- + St. Louis has a remarkably large, diverse, and productive arts sector that includes a large number of organizations.
- + The largest arts organizations are larger than their counterparts in similar-size cities.
- + St. Louis is missing a cadre of mid-sized organizations; most organizations are very large or of modest size.
- + There is a great reliance on fundraising by the larger arts institutions.



- + A small group of very generous funders is providing a large portion of philanthropy in St. Louis.
- + Almost half the citizens of St. Louis are African American, and there are no organizations of color with budgets exceeding \$1 million.
- + Newer organizations have a challenge breaking into the major funders.
- + Artistic planning is relatively short-term; this hampers ability to create larger-scale projects, to raise large gifts, and to attract major media interest.
- + Marketing expenditures are low; this makes building earned and contributed income far more difficult.
- + There is a very limited pool of trained arts managers, and it isn't easy getting staff to move to St. Louis.
- + Ticket prices are relatively modest, and much is available for free.
- + Boards are not as engaged in fundraising as necessary.
- + Most organizations have limited national visibility.
- + Traditionally, every organization received RAC funding, even very small organizations; this has changed.
- + Arts education is needed; yet coordination with the school system is limited.
- + Many of these factors should guide major funders as they plan their arts philanthropy. Ideally, a group of funders could work together to address the major issues.

The researchers arrived at those conclusions after making the following observations about the St. Louis arts ecosystem, and about RAC:

TRENDS IN ARTS ECOLOGY

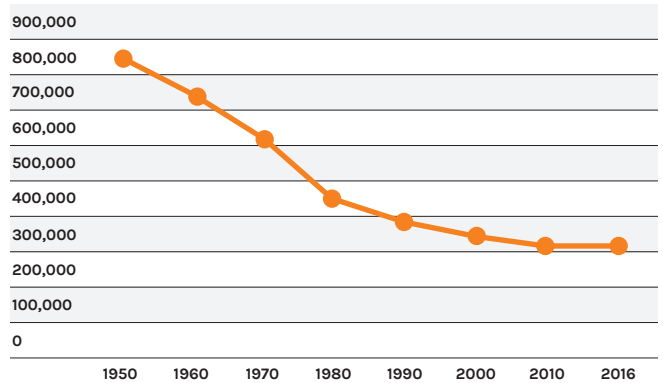
The overarching arts ecology of St. Louis is changing. This is reflected in trends such as:

- + Reduction in arts education in public schools
- + Decrease in subscriptions to arts organizations
- + Aging donor base
- + Increased role of electronic substitutes and electronic distribution of the arts (71% of adults get arts on the internet; 51% attend a live event each year)

AUDIENCE

St. Louis City's population has declined significantly since the 1950s, from more than 800,000 to just over 300,000 today.

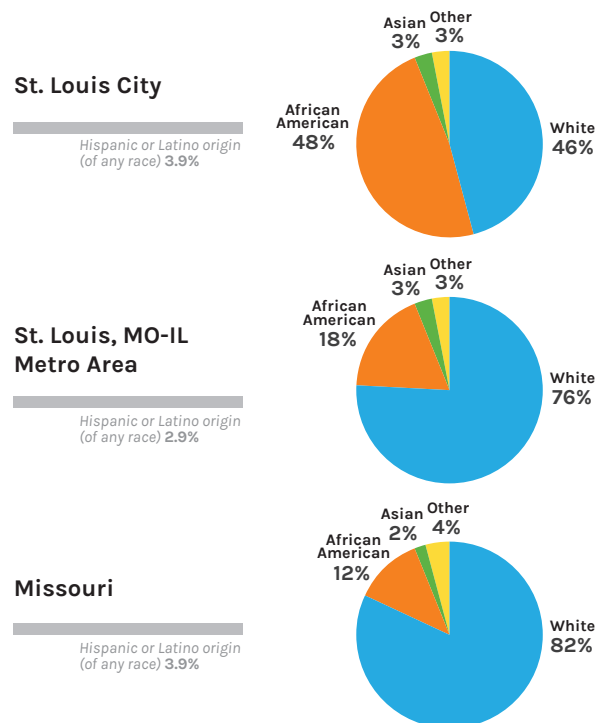
SAINT LOUIS CITY'S POPULATION HAS DECLINED SINCE THE 1950S



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS

St. Louis City's ethnic diversity differs significantly from its metro area and from Missouri. Specifically, 48% of St. Louis City residents identify as African American, compared to 18% of residents of the St. Louis metro area and 12% of residents of Missouri.

SAINT LOUIS CITY'S ETHNIC DIVERSITY DIFFERS SIGNIFICANTLY FROM ITS METRO AREA AND MISSOURI



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 2012-2016 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



WE HAVE 47% AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION, AND ONLY ONE AFRICAN AMERICAN ARTS INSTITUTION WITH A BUDGET OVER \$500,000.”



These demographic realities contribute to several audience challenges:

- + There is too much going on in the city for the size of the population. The arts infrastructure in place is to support the higher population, which no longer exists.
- + There is a high quality of arts and culture offerings, but a perception that the local audience doesn't understand just how good it is.
- + St. Louis citizens have civic pride and feel the 'need' to have arts and culture offerings, but they may not take advantage of those offerings.
- + There is a lack of racial diversity in audiences, with a few exceptions in specific areas of programming.
- + There is a lack of data on attendance and audience in general.

AUDIENCE & ARTS ORGANIZATION ALIGNMENT

While almost half of the residents of St. Louis City identify as African American, there are very few African American arts organizations or institutions.

One interview subject said, "We have 47% African American population, and only one African American arts institution with a budget over \$500,000."

According to another study respondent, a vibrant African American culture exists in St. Louis, but it is vastly under-resourced and exists outside of institutionalized cultural organizations. Instead it is supported through grassroots organizations, individual artist networks, and non-arts entities such as churches or community centers.

FUNDING AND REVENUE

Funding is obviously a key element of the arts ecology. The study found that:

- + Most organizations are highly dependent upon contributed revenue.
- + With a few exceptions, the size of the largest individual gifts received is modest.
- + Board giving requirements are modest, and most board gifts are small.
- + Financial performance is mixed among respondents, with operating budget financial positions ranging from surplus to deficits, with many fluctuating up and down.
- + Too many arts organizations are accessing the same small pool of arts funding. This dependence on such few funders makes the arts sector fragile.
- + There is a perception that the majority of the resources are going to the largest institutions only.
- + St. Louis lags behind comparable cities, such as Cleveland, Minneapolis, and Kansas City, in arts funding from large private foundations.

In addition, organizations that formed in the past, when St. Louis was performing better financially, benefited from strong corporate support that enabled them to become established and create endowments; as a result, these organizations are stable today. But newer organizations do not have the benefit of that early start, and many interviewees expressed a sense that if you were not "at the table" at that point in history, there is no support for your organization.

MARKETING THE ARTS

Study respondents stated that "very little" or "not enough" is spent on marketing the arts – both in terms of the percentage of budget spent on marketing, and in terms of general perception. Additional insights on marketing were that:

- + Many organizations are using social media, not just as part of a digital strategy, but simply because they can't afford paid advertising.
- + Partnerships with St. Louis Public Radio and coverage in print media through articles and reviews are key marketing elements for most organizations.
- + There is little adoption of technology or digital interventions (aside from social media and digital ads).
- + Few organizations pursue organized institutional marketing campaigns.





STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY:
ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS



It has never been the goal of the organization to turn out piano virtuosos. It's been more about the positive impact that learning to play and learning to create music has on someone's life, especially someone who is in difficult circumstances. Many of our students come from challenging situations. So it's always been about more than just learning how to play the piano. We try to use the piano as a gateway to build self-esteem, empowerment, and creative expression. More and more, science is proving the benefits of creating music – some of which can be proven, some of which you just have to see with your own eyes to understand what it means to a kid.

One of our big goals is to get the kids to stay in the program longer to continue with the benefits of it into their teen years and beyond. So our main focus is deepening our impact rather than increasing the number of students we have. We have some general income level qualifications based on the number of people in the household, but that is flexible depending on other circumstances in someone's life. We make sure we are concentrating our efforts on the folks who need it most. And, in many cases, they are who benefit from it most.

A lot of kids have the chance to take music lessons and have a piano in the house. That's great if they can choose whether or not to take advantage of that. But we're focused on those who want to and can't. We have seen the benefits of giving them this opportunity through this outlet because the music itself can't change the world, but it can change the way people feel. And that's what can change their world. It's a way of improving someone's attitude about themselves, which empowers them to address those other things that music doesn't directly address.”

— **MATT BRINKMANN, PIANOS FOR PEOPLE**

Photography and Interview
by Lindy Drew, Humans of St. Louis



WHAT'S NEXT?

THE 2020-2024 STRATEGIC PLAN



After receiving input from all who were engaged during the EVOKE and ARTS & phases of our work and the arts ecology study, RAC set out to synthesize these insights into a strategic plan.

Several core questions motivated this effort:

- + What are RAC's goals for the arts in St. Louis?
- + What is RAC's role in achieving these goals?
- + What is the current situation in St. Louis? What needs to change?
- + How is RAC currently addressing these needs? What do we want to build on, and what do we want to change?
- + What are our strategies for doing these things?
- + How do we translate all of this into a narrative for our constituents and the public?

THE STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

As we began the work of developing a strategic plan, we discussed the importance of operating as a mission-driven organization — and how having a clear mission based on our enabling legislation would help anchor all of our strategic decisions going forward.

We developed this mission statement with an eye on the changes in St. Louis, the nation, and the world over the past decade, and the strategic planning efforts we were engaged in. While our purpose remains to promote, encourage, and foster the arts and culture in our community, we will move forward with the following mission statement:

RAC MISSION STATEMENT

As the leading public catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis, the Regional Arts Commission leverages the power of creativity to strengthen and enrich our community.

As we introduce this new mission, it is important to underscore our purpose in choosing certain words.

"public"— It was important to acknowledge, early in the statement, our public role: Our funding model is made possible by enabling legislation passed by the General Assembly of Missouri; and as a grantmaker, we feel an obligation and responsibility to disburse those grants in a way that supports the most public good.

"catalyst" — It was clear throughout the EVOKE listening process that change is needed in the arts and culture sector. It was also clear that without an organization with influence applying pressure to the levers of change, that

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change was unlikely to happen. Thus, RAC understands the need to be a catalyst for positive change and to take an active role as advocate, convener, status-quo challenger, and amplifier of the voices of individual artists and arts organizations.

"leverage" – The challenges we face demand a level of resources beyond any single entity's reach. We believe it is incumbent on RAC to use its monetary and other resources to maximize their impact. By investing resources wisely and in collaboration with others we strive to magnify their overall benefit.

"power of creativity" – The arts are grounded in creativity, of course, but we chose to include this phrase to emphasize our belief in the impact that creativity can have on everyone who makes and appreciates art. We also believe the creativity RAC must leverage extends beyond the creation of art and culture to creative approaches to collaboration, marketing, teaching, resourcing, and more.

"community" – We understand that RAC exists because of and as part of the St. Louis community. The stronger our community, the stronger RAC will be, and the more RAC can live its mission, the greater the benefit we bring to the community we call home. We see our work as intimately interwoven in the fabric of community organizations that give St. Louis so much of its warmth and strength, and feel a responsibility to be a strong, vibrant thread in that larger fabric.

Supporting the mission statement is a set of core values:

RAC CORE VALUES

Our core values embody our culture, spirit, and dedication to living our mission. They keep us grounded and help us make good decisions about everything we do.

We are:

- + Passionate champions for the art and culture
- + Accountable stewards of the public trust
- + Committed to practices that promote inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility
- + Socially and civically engaged community catalysts
- + Servant leaders

To further support the mission and core values, the strategic planning committee developed a set of guiding principles:

RAC GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are an investor in the arts and artists.

Our investments in organizations, initiatives, and efforts to make and promote art in the St. Louis region take many forms, but all are made with a goal of leveraging the impact of our dollars. We will contribute to the sector in the most strategic and impactful ways, whether that means support for programs, investing in start-ups or innovations, or underwriting the training and development of local leaders in the arts. We invest in artists to help assure established and promising professionals want to live, work, and thrive in St. Louis.

We will prioritize quality in all that we do.

St. Louis is home to a thriving arts community with outstanding talent, and we believe the region is a world-class destination for the arts. We intend to foster and grow this reputation by supporting work of significance, and artists and organizations that demonstrate excellence in their work.

We believe that equity is an urgent and necessary priority.

An individual's or organization's wealth (or lack thereof), geographic location, background, or race should not predict their level of success. We believe that all organizations involved in arts and culture must reflect our community and create cultures that honor equity. We will invest in efforts and model practices and behavior at RAC that address equity in meaningful ways. We recognize the urgency of supporting culturally specific organizations that serve the needs of historically marginalized communities to ensure that their forms of artistic expression are fully represented.

We believe that every child deserves a well-rounded education that includes the arts.

High quality learning experiences in the arts, both in school and in the community, promote 21st-century skills and a wide array of academic and social benefits. We will invest in arts education that helps ensure that students can fulfill their creative potential and become life-long participants and patrons of the arts.

We will promote partnerships to strengthen the sector.

We will be intentionally collaborative, finding ways to work together – across organizations and sectors – breaking down silos, leveraging resources, and maximizing our reach in ways that none of us can accomplish by working alone. We value investing with partners and encouraging groups to work together where there is synergy and opportunity.

A COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

A critical outcome of EVOKE was a clarion call for RAC, the largest public funder of the arts in the region, to open the door to the arts for more people, and to lead the way by establishing diversity, equity, and inclusion as an organizational priority.

Historical and recent data confirms that the legacy of institutionalized racism in this country and in this community continues to present barriers to far too many St. Louisans seeking to fulfill their potential. While some of the discriminatory systems have changed since the passage of civil rights laws 50 years ago, the vast inequities they created persist in school and housing segregation, sentencing disparities, lending and hiring discrimination, and wealth and homeownership gaps.

RAC acknowledges that the arts are not immune from these realities. RAC's own internal policies, grantmaking procedures, contracting practices, organizational culture, and the small decisions made every day are a product of and contributor to systemic social and economic inequalities.

“
THE ARTS ARE
NOT IMMUNE FROM
THESE REALITIES.”

STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

To ensure a full creative life for every St. Louisan, RAC commits to champion policies and practices that promote diversity, racial equity, accessibility, and inclusion in the arts.

Thus, as part of the strategic planning process, RAC formed a committee to develop a statement that would align the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion across every aspect of the strategic plan. The statement is intended to embody the values and principles that RAC will exemplify in its policies, practices, internal operations, and external programs.

The beliefs and commitments included in the statement aim to ensure that all people – including but not limited to those who have been historically underrepresented based on race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, or religion – are represented in the development of arts policy; the support of artists; the nurturing of accessible, thriving venues for expression; and the fair distribution of programmatic, financial, and informational resources.

Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

To ensure a full creative life for every St. Louisan, RAC commits to champion policies and practices that promote diversity, racial equity, accessibility, and inclusion in the arts.

Beliefs

To provide informed, authentic leadership for the achievement of this vision, RAC believes that:

- + The ability to express, celebrate, and champion cultural tradition and heritage is elemental to honest civic discourse and the well-being of our community.



- + The assurance of equal opportunity for all people to participate in the arts is a fundamental starting point.
- + Cultural programs must be fully accessible and inclusive to every individual, including people with disabilities and older adults.
- + Artists and cultural creators have a unique role in challenging inequity and imagining new and more just realities.
- + Inequity is pervasive and historic. Disparities and discrimination are daily occurrences rooted in long-standing majority privilege and power inside and outside of the arts.
- + Sustained racialized public policies and institutional practices, both conscious and unconscious, have resulted in unequal access to education and resources for people of color. This systemic unequal access to opportunity has resulted in generations of unjust and inequitable outcomes for the community.
- + We accept that power has created uneven starting points for some communities and individuals. And while equality has become synonymous with "leveling the playing field," equity levels up more for those who need it.
- + To achieve equity, we must deliberately and actively promote, encourage and foster opportunities to assure artists and arts organizations of color thrive in our community.

Commitments

As the leading public funder in the region, RAC commits to pursue racial equity internally and externally, so that the documented benefits of arts and culture can be more widely shared.

Internally, RAC will:

- + Seek the knowledge and training needed to be a more equitable organization, with a goal to be a model of best practices;
- + Remain on a path of continuous improvement, reviewing existing policies, practices, and programs, and making incremental changes as needed to achieve our stated goals;
- + Hold ourselves accountable by acknowledging that racial equity does not currently exist in the arts, which is holding not only the St. Louis arts sector back, but also holding St. Louis back;
- + Ensure that the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is integrated into all facets and activities of the organization, from day-to-day operations to long-range organizational goals and objectives. Every member – board and staff – is responsible for supporting this commitment.

Externally, RAC will:

- + Encourage and support opportunities for constituents to learn about racial equity and to gain the skills they need to address inequities within their organizations and practices;
- + Improve the cultural leadership pipeline in the local arts sector and promote the sharing of best practices in this work;
- + Champion those who are making progress to be more equitable; promote examples and practices that facilitate strategies that lead to equity and support the artists and organizations in our cultural community who are equity champions;
- + Join and support others – within and outside the arts – who are already part of a growing movement to make St. Louis a more racially equitable and inclusive place to live;
- + Facilitate honest and ongoing conversations about all forms of discrimination within the arts to assure a deeper understanding about the historic and systemic contributors to exclusionary practices and the new norms and behaviors that must be adopted to create a more just society.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES

The strategic plan we have developed has four priorities:

- + Grow and Develop Capacity of Artists and Arts Organizations
- + Advance the Education of Young People in and through the Arts
- + Increase Equity in the Arts through Leadership and Collaboration
- + Strengthen Key Organizational Infrastructure

GROW AND DEVELOP CAPACITY OF ARTISTS AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

This strategy will focus on arts management training for small-budget and mid-sized nonprofit arts and culture organizations, as well as individual artists. Goals of this strategy include creating healthy, growing organizations that achieve a diversity of revenue sources and supporting individual artists to build strong and sustainable creative practices.

The programs that will support this strategy will include:

- + Classes and workshops on the fundamentals of arts administration: program planning, marketing (including cultural tourism), board development, fundraising, and financial management
- + Mentoring of staff and board members
- + Advanced training in strategic planning, mounting capital campaigns, and endowment planning
- + A focus on practical solutions to attaining growth and sustainability



- + Providing workshops and skills training for local, nonprofit arts and culture marketing professionals
- + Organizing special cohorts to address the specific needs of small-budget and start-up organizations
- + Workshops and coaching for artists on topics such as financial management and career planning
- + Educating, building awareness of, and incentivizing collaborations, partnerships, mergers and strategic alliances

ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS

The goal of this strategy is to meaningfully increase exposure and access to arts education for every child, in every school, through collaborative programming.



To support this strategy, RAC will:

- + Convene local organization and leaders in arts education to develop and implement collaborative strategies;
- + Focus on area public schools with emphasis on St. Louis public schools;
- + Conduct an assessment and planning process to establish measurable goals and outcomes;
- + Lead by the guiding principle that every student, pre-kindergarten through grade 8, receives ongoing, sequential, high-quality arts education both in and out of the classroom.

INCREASE EQUITY IN THE ARTS THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

To increase access to the arts through leadership and collaboration, RAC will:

- + Target leadership (board and key staff) of general nonprofit arts and culture organizations to receive anti-bias/anti-racism training and to develop organizational diversity, equity, and inclusion plans;
- + Build partnerships that invite a diversity of artists and cultural organizations to participate and invest in new public art projects and programs;
- + Encourage participation in workshops to help organizations deepen understanding of anti-bias/anti-racism principles; develop or update cultural equity statements; create equity and inclusion policies, plans, and collaborative programs;
- + Target leadership (board and key staff) of organizations of color (particularly African American) to receive training and support on arts management principles to promote greater stability and growth;
- + Provide arts management education, mentoring, and financial support for local artists and organizations of color;
- + Provide a platform for joint marketing efforts – local, regional, and national;
- + Encourage joint ventures with strategically selected African American arts institutions of note;
- + Join funding collaboratives to support promising partnerships that share RAC's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.



STRENGTHEN KEY ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to support this ambitious work, we know we must have a strong organizational infrastructure in place. There are four key areas—all of which support all of our other priorities—where we will focus our attention, energy, and resources:

Grantmaking

RAC will continue to focus on its core work of grantmaking. In our first 35 years, our grantmaking supported over 7,000 arts organizations and artists, representing over \$100 million in awarded grants. Through our newest grant category, Artist Fellowships, we have awarded 70 artists a total of \$20,000 each, totaling \$1.4 million.

We recognize the value the arts provide as an economic engine for the community generally and their role as a significant driver of the source of RAC funding.

We will continue to support artists and arts organizations through this kind of diversified grantmaking, providing support through the following grant categories:

Organizations

General Operating Support grants, which provide unrestricted, renewable funding to support the day-to-day operations of nonprofit arts organizations that produce and present year-round programming.

Program Support grants, which provide aid for a one-time project or ongoing program that broadens and deepens participation in or access to the arts.

Individual Artists

Artist Support Grants, which provide direct funds for an artist's projects, needs, and creative opportunities.

Artist Fellowships, which recognize artistic excellence and honor the work of seasoned artists, advance the work of mid-career artists, and nurture the work of developing artists.

We will look for ways to integrate the strategic plan priorities into RAC's grantmaking.

We will work to improve our grantmaking efforts, so that they can be more inclusive, create more opportunities for more artists and arts organizations, and ultimately, have a more positive impact.



Strategic Initiatives

Established as an organizational vehicle to implement community priorities identified in ARTS &, RAC created a portfolio of programs to provide a strategic approach to community concerns. The various programs allow RAC to leverage its resources, test ideas, learn, and implement programs through collaborative efforts. These programs include:

Gyo Obata Fellowship

This ten-week paid summer fellowship program for undergraduate students pursuing careers in arts management is supported by major funding from the Gateway Foundation, and addresses the need for a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable local nonprofit arts and culture sector.

Teaching Artist Institute

The St. Louis Teaching Artist Institute (TAI) is made possible by a major grant from Wells Fargo Advisors. Springboard to Learning and the National Conference for Community and Justice of Metropolitan St. Louis (NCCJ St. Louis) oversee the curriculum development; and participants benefit from ongoing education throughout TAI with peer learning and individualized coaching from master teaching artists.

Downtown Public Art - InSITE 2020

InSITE 2020, commissioned by The Downtown STL Public Art Initiative, a community partnership between the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, Explore St. Louis, and Downtown St. Louis, Inc., welcomes visitors, encourages exploration of its streets and public spaces, opens up opportunities for local artists, and highlights downtown St. Louis as a place for creativity, possibility, and diversity.

Community Arts Training Institute

The Community Arts Training (CAT) Institute, the longest-running sustained training program of its kind in the United States, is an innovative program centered on the belief that art has the power to be an agent for positive social change. The CAT Institute, founded in 1997, is a five-month training that fosters successful partnerships between artists of all disciplines, social workers, educators, community and social activists, and policy-makers with the goal of creating relevant, impactful arts programs particularly in under-resourced community settings, e.g. neighborhood organizations, social service agencies, development initiatives, and after-school programs.

Technology and Data

One of the clear messages from the working groups was the need to gather and leverage data to make the case for the arts and the contribution of the sector to the economy. As the leading public catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis, RAC must play a key role in research and evaluation.

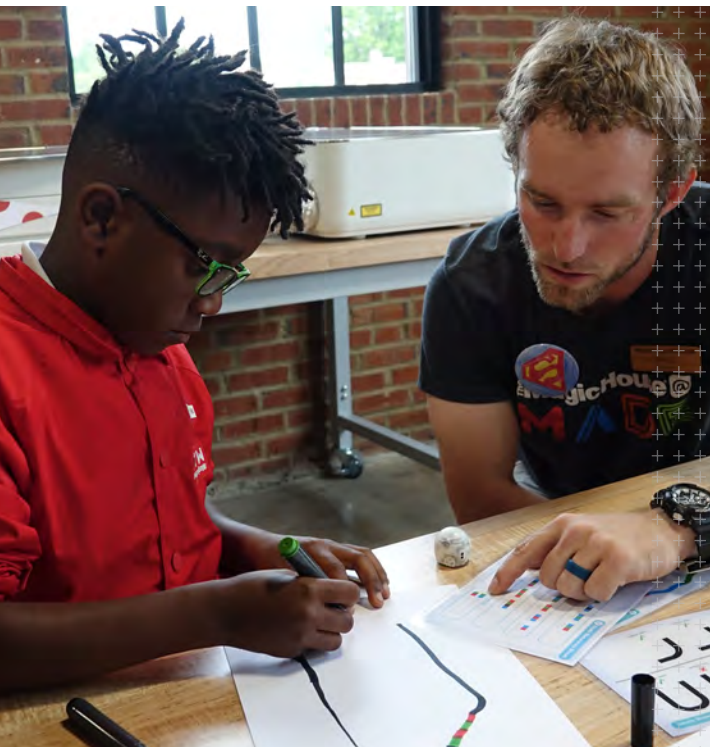
As a key convener of the arts sector, RAC should leverage technology to connect artists to resources, support organizations, and each other, and to promote the arts through electronic channels.

Management and Governance

RAC should represent excellence and best practices in management and governance. In the realm of governance, this means we will clearly define Commissioner roles and responsibilities as follows:

- + Oversee development and implementation of the strategic plan
- + Approve major policy changes

- + Ensure prudent use of all assets, including facility, people, and goodwill
- + Ensure organization's applicable laws and regulations are upheld
- + Monitor financial performance
- + Oversee recruitment and management of the Executive Director
- + Support the recruitment and retention of high-performing employees who are mission-driven
- + Serve as ambassadors for RAC and the arts community
- + Advocate for continued public funding of the arts
- + Support an inclusive, equitable, and collaborative work culture



“

RAC WILL REMAIN
A KEY GRANTMAKER
IN THE ARTS.”

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Even with these foundational elements and top priorities in place, essential questions remain:

- + What will RAC actually do?
- + How will we fulfill our new mission?
- + Where will our attention be focused?
- + What does this look like in practice?
- + How do we actually do it?

Here's how we're thinking about those questions:

RAC will fulfill its new mission by leveraging the myriad resources of St. Louis and RAC's unique convening power to create a vital, sustainable, and diverse arts sector.

RAC will remain a key grantmaker in the arts. Revisions will be made to the annual grantmaking program to ensure that it aligns with RAC's strategic priorities and in response to feedback derived from RAC grantees and others through ongoing community engagement. This core programming will be complemented by a set of projects and initiatives that address the concerns raised in the environmental analysis and that allow RAC to become a true cultural hub for St. Louis.

The existing set of strategic initiative programs will be evaluated and sunset where appropriate. New programs and initiatives will be created over the coming five years to support the four strategic priorities outlined above: Grow and Develop Capacity of Artists and Arts Organizations, Advance the Education of Young People in and through the Arts, Increase Equity in the Arts through Leadership and Collaboration, and Strengthen Key Organizational Infrastructure.

Efforts will also be made to forge joint ventures and collaborations among arts institutions.

Achieving this ambitious program will require the hiring of new staff and the development of new internal systems, structures, and culture that establish RAC as a great place to work. A modest fund development operation (focused on major gifts) will provide necessary financial resources driven by the engagement of a committed and diverse board of Commissioners. One major task for the Commissioners will be to evaluate RAC's facility needs to ensure that the Commission's home supports its new portfolio of programs.

To review the implementation timeline, please visit p. 6.





STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY: INCREASE EQUITY IN THE ARTS THROUGH LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION



We've always felt, whether it's onsite or off, if you're going to learn about making, you should learn about making from a local professional artist. This kind of access is really important. It allows us to give artists opportunities to share their skills and talents with young people, and it gives teens a chance to think about the arts as a possible path in one's life. So we have been the art program at Vashon High School, bringing in a series of artists who work with students on projects each semester that culminate in works of art, which we then show in the museum.

We had always shown student artwork on site, mostly from programs like New Art In the Neighborhood or LEAP Middle School Initiative. But we've expanded, so every season, every time the museum is open, you will see student artwork in at least two galleries in the upstairs area. Students are getting a legitimate and honored footprint within the museum, both as complement and foil to the work by the artists who are in our exhibition program. And because we work hard to make sure those exhibiting artists spend time in some capacity with the students, there's the opportunity to share not only the same space, but their visions with artists from around the world.

It is the lifeblood of any organization to consistently know that you will have support for the things that are sometimes not sexy, the stuff people might not be interested in. And I don't mean the one exhibition that is appealing to a certain funder or the one artist with whom you might work with on this day or in this season. I'm talking about the idea that there is an organization that will allow us to hire the most extraordinary staff to fulfill the mission of the museum—that's the kind of support you need consistently. It's the kind of funding that allows us to do the programmatic activities we do. You really need that support. Without it, you're toast. That is why a funder like RAC is central and germane to not only what our regular activities are, but it is essential to every expansion, every bit of growth, every shift, every Vashon. Every project like that comes out of the ability to keep the center healthy. And RAC keeps the center healthy. By taking care of those things, you're allowed to think big.”

— LISA MELANDRI, CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM ST. LOUIS

Photography and Interview
by Lindy Drew, Humans of St. Louis

CONCLUSION

In conducting this process, we listened to and amplified voices in the arts and culture community that for too long had not been truly heard. With the help of community stakeholders, we took a close look at our programs and our approaches to supporting the arts and identified ways we could improve them. We took a step back to look at, and update, our mission and core values. We examined ways we could advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in every facet of our work and throughout the region.

While we're still in the early stages of this work, the process that produced this plan has already generated significant value, and has begun to change our organization. As a result of this process, we see the arts and culture sector differently. We see RAC's role in the sector differently. We see the region differently. And today, more people than ever are engaged and invested in what RAC and the arts in this region can be.

If the hundreds of people who shared their candid thoughts in interviews and listening sessions and public forums and offered their perspectives in public surveys now feel invested in the future of the arts and culture in St. Louis, then we will have the foundation for the thing we most need to achieve the goals of this strategic plan:

Your partnership.

If we can rally partners into this work with us, the changes mapped out in this plan are possible. If it's just RAC's plan, this strategic plan will have limited success and limited impact. It can have greater success and greater impact if it is a process of co-creation.

We believe that RAC can become an even better advocate for arts and culture organizations and individual artists and a better catalyst for the sector to grow and thrive. We see our role as evolving, because we heard your call for an arts champion with not only the resources to support arts and culture in the region, but also the platform from which to influence the regional conversation about arts and culture and the will and persistence to bring people together to do the work.

We are ready and eager to rise to that challenge, and we know we can do it.

But we can't do it alone.

We need your support. We need the city's support. We need the county's support. We need the support of nonprofit organizations and corporate citizens. We need the support of the people and organizations across the region who know the positive impact that the arts can have on all of our lives.

So, if there is a part of this strategic plan that had you nodding your head, or thinking "Yes, we need to do that," then consider this a request for your partnership. Reach out to us, and let us know you want to help.

Because we're ready to step up and lead the way on what you told us we needed to do – to be that champion and catalyst for arts and culture in St. Louis that you want and need us to be.

Will you join us?



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Meridith McKinley, Via Partnership LLP

Lauren Ross, Laumeier Sculpture Park

Mark Witzling, Craft Alliance Center of Art + Design

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Pacia Anderson

Ellie Balk

Terry Barber

Dwayne Bosman

Tom Brady

Glynis Brooks

Gregory S. Carr

Juan William Chávez

Syrhea Conaway

Zlatko Ćosić

Addoley Dzegede

Adam Flores

Julie Gant

Jacqui Germain

Ron Himes

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Fannie Belle Lebby

Harvey Lockhart

DeAnna Massie

De Andrea Nichols

Fred Onovwerosuoke

Mark Pagano

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