

Strategic Plan 2020-24

Approved by the Board of Directors, September 21, 2020

Prepared by Oomen Brookes LLC for the Strategic Planning Committee:

Mary Birmingham, Curator

Lisa Butler, Board Chair

Marie Cohen, Board Member

Melanie Cohn, Executive Director

Siobhan Creem, Board Member

Cassandra Demski, Director of Studio School

Anne Grissinger, Board Member

Debi Schwarzmenn, Committee Chair and Board Member

Sarah Walko, Director of Education and Community Engagement

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Special Considerations: Strategic Plan Committee Statement

As we set out on Strategic Planning in the Fall of 2019, no one could have imagined what we would face in Spring 2020 as we put the finishing touches on this document. The Coronavirus Pandemic has substantially changed our current environment and has had significant economic impact on the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey.

The Strategic Planning Committee met to review the plan as the events of Spring 2020 were unfolding and the committee feels the strategy is still a strong one for the organization. However, given the challenges and dynamics of the current environment, the committee also recognizes that the next 12-months must be dedicated to weathering the current crisis. The committee believes the prudent course of action is to spend the first 12 months (beginning September 2020), focusing on **Option 1: Streamlined and Solvent**, which is described on page 10 of this document. Thus, this plan's scope, which originally covered 2020-2023, will now be expanded to cover 2020-2024, with the first year being one of recovery. The rest of this document, then, addresses the three years following (September 2021-2024). During the recovery year, we will keep the goals of this Strategic Plan in mind, so that—even as we recover—we can best position ourselves for success in the three years that follow.

I. Executive Summary

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey is well-positioned to deliver high-quality arts engagement to a diverse community. Its status as an accredited museum, and long history of engaging generous donors in the area, position VACNJ well to broaden access to its transformative programming. Over the three years of this plan, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey will pursue a focused strategy of broadening access among underserved groups¹ to the transformational potential of arts programming.

¹ In this context, 'underserved groups' means groups of people with common attributes that typically result in reduced access to quality arts programming. Example attributes include: low income, incarcerated, elderly and mobility impaired, or living with a cognitive disability.

Between 2017 and 2020 VACNJ made important changes that put the organization on a stronger financial footing, while strengthening the three pillars of quality programming: Studio School, Exhibitions, and Education and Community Programming. The strategic plan for 2020-2024 builds on VACNJ's programming strengths, along with its unique positioning as a channel for higher-income arts lovers to support access to high quality programming for people who typically have more limited access.

The Visual Arts Center is widely respected and well-positioned to lead art-related initiatives in the north Jersey region. At the same time, VACNJ's donor base is shifting, and VACNJ needs to alter its messaging and intent in order to captivate a new generation of major donors. VACNJ has an opportunity to interest Summit-region donors in supporting broadening access to transformative arts experiences for specific demographic groups.

Our strategy for the three years of this plan involves building and consolidating high-quality community programming serving underserved groups, and working alongside community partners to do so. Our fund development strategy will adapt to support this work. Studio School will continue to provide excellent quality programming and to generate the financial contribution that is essential to the sustainability of the organization. Studio School will pursue select, tailored opportunities that deepen the organization's connection to our community partners by welcoming their members to the Studio School. Exhibitions will continue to provide high-quality programming, exhibiting a wide range of voices that reflect the diversity of the New Jersey community. Where resources allow, VACNJ will invest in increasing access to exhibitions for underserved groups.

This plan is expected to result in growth in the VACNJ operating budget of around 10% over three years, with investments in additional programming matched by an increase in donations.

Over the plan's three years, we will lay the financial, governance and programmatic groundwork that will allow us to consider a possible major investment during our next planning cycle. Through strong stewardship of our assets, by building our board and our donor base, we will grow our capacity to embark in the future on a significant project or program investment, potentially including a capital campaign.

II. Strategic Planning Process

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey embarked on a strategic planning process in September 2019, with the assistance of Oomen Brookes LLC. The Board formed a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) of five board members and four staff². The SPC met four times to review the findings from research and to consider strategic options. To provide input, Oomen Brookes conducted interviews with key stakeholders and funders, focus groups with a selection of supporters, and two meetings with the VACNJ board to obtain their input. Details of this research is provided in Appendix A.

Questions to Address

At the outset, the Strategic Planning Committee agreed upon the following set of key questions to address during the process:

- Who are the constituents or groups of constituents that VACNJ is best able to serve, through which programs? Given VACNJ's mission, are there important gaps in our service provision that we need to address?
- How can VACNJ reconcile its position as a local arts education center with its wider roles as a provider of outreach services and as a leading institution for contemporary art in the tri-state region? What does this mean for communications, outreach and fund development activities?
- How can VACNJ make most effective use of its status as an accredited Museum and leading arts institution to further its mission?
- How can we most effectively match sources of income (earned, granted, donated) with applications of our mission?
- What are the principal opportunities for the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey to further its mission over the next three years?

² Mary Birmingham, Curator; Lisa Butler, Board Chair; Marie Cohen, Board Member; Melanie Cohn, Executive Director; Siobhan Creem, Board Member; Cassandra Demski, Director of Studio School; Debi Schwarzmenn, Committee Chair and Board Member; Anne Grissinger, Board Member; Sarah Walko, Director of Education and Community Engagement

III. Research Findings

Below is a summary of the key findings from research conducted as part of the strategic planning project.

Funding trends

VACNJ has benefited, and continues to benefit from a loyal local donor base. This ‘traditional’ base has been motivated by a desire to support Summit amenities, and values the Art Center for both its high-quality school and its exhibitions. The population around Summit includes many higher-income individuals with an interest in the arts.

One long time donor says *“There’s been a group of dedicated Summit folks that have supported the organization over all these years, yet the new community are less aware of the VACNJ”*.

According to Jordan Glatt, Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Community Foundation of New Jersey, the newer generation of arts-interested donors is more inclined to support specific programs for underserved groups than to make unrestricted gifts to institutions. *“The younger generation is more hands on, wants to see results, wants a greater connection. They ask “how do we know there are benefits?” and want to see specific programs in action.”*

The VACNJ’s status as an accredited museum with a strong track record makes it well-positioned to attract donations from arts-interested individual donors, and funders who know the organization well see an opportunity to generate more support from the Summit community for increased access to transformative programming.

New Jersey has a very limited number of foundations with a specific interest in the arts. Those that do exist, including the Geraldine R Dodge Foundation, the Grunin Foundation and the James E and Diane W Burke Foundation, tend to be primarily focused on supporting evidence-based programming for underserved audiences.

There is enthusiasm among VACNJ’s loyal donors for the organization to take a big bet on an exciting project, and a belief that VACNJ’s reputation positions it well for a future capital campaign. Donors told us: *“The VACNJ should dream a little”* and *“I think a satellite location in Newark would be a good idea.”* Those close to the organization see that it will be more successful at such an effort if it can build its Board further first, allowing new, energetic leaders to emerge. Board member Joe Robinson said *“If you think big enough, you can get money for a project, but you’ve got to have someone who’s willing to take it on and lead it.”* Jordan Glatt’s perspective supports this view: *“If you have a compelling story, the money will come. Really, getting that story down and having the passion for it is key. Projects need a passionate leader.”*

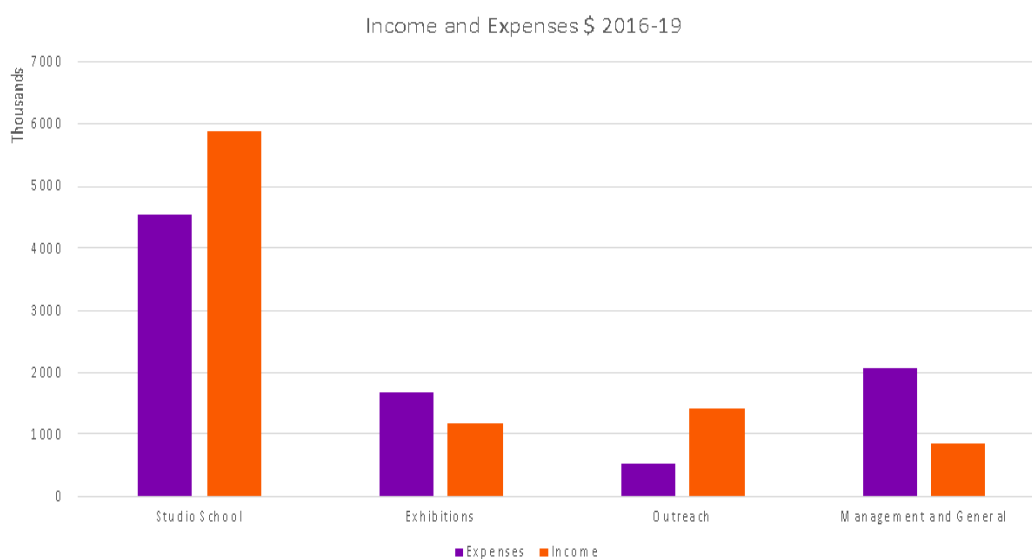
Identity and mission

The Visual Arts Center’s supporters clearly see Exhibitions as an essential part of VACNJ programming. One donor commented: *“Gallery and school are naturally symbiotic, and need to be treated as part of the same mission”*. VACNJ’s stakeholders are less clear about the nature, extent and purpose of its community programming, though when they hear about it they express enthusiasm.

Some Board Members and staff have expressed frustration with the difficulty of explaining VACNJ’s identity, and note challenges in messaging. Many Board Members have expressed a desire for the VACNJ to be a welcoming place for all members of the community. This desire may face barriers of perception and historical experience when messaging to and working with racially diverse audiences considering Summit’s history of white-dominated culture. Board Members expressed support for increasing access through outreach, and an interest in building a strategy with this aim in mind.

Financial trends

Over the last four years, Studio School has been the primary contributor to overhead. Education and Community Programming accounts for a significant amount of unrestricted income, resulting in a contribution to overhead, and Exhibitions receives modest subsidy from Studio School (see Figure 1).³

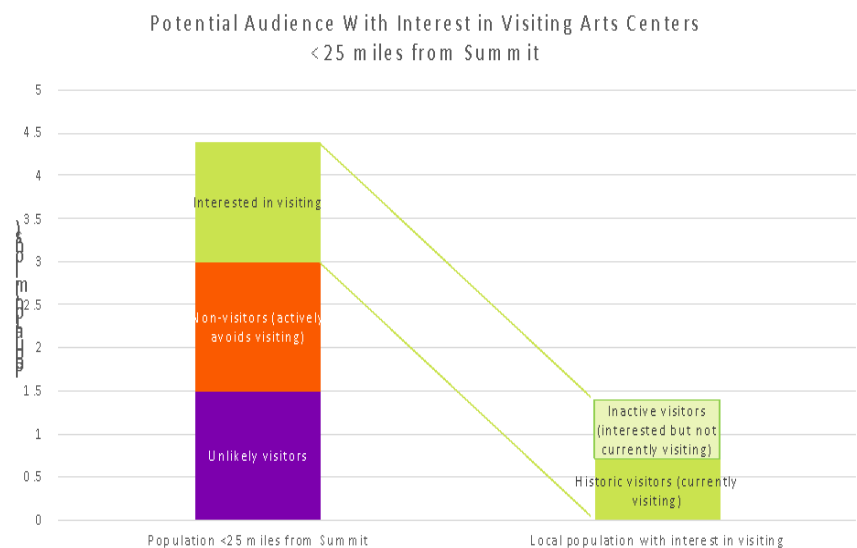


³ Chart shows last four financial years aggregated; unrestricted donations and endowment funds have been attributed to programs where appropriate; like-for-like adjustments have been made to account for changes in accounting practice

Figure 1: Income and Expenses

Audience Trends

Based on staff experience, exhibitions currently attract visitors traveling up to 50 miles, though most current visitors travel 25 miles or less. Visitors are mostly white and middle-aged, except where educational programming attracts other demographics e.g. Elizabeth public schools. National research suggests that the potential unreached audience within 25 miles of Summit is more than 500k; this untapped audience includes a high proportion of millennials and people of color. See Figure 2.



Notes: Based on US-wide survey of visiting habits to art museums and arts centers;
Population estimates exclude New York City; based on 2010 Census
Source: The National Attitudes, Awareness, and Usage Study, IM PACTS

Figure 2: Potential Visitors to Art Museums and Arts Centers

IV. Strategic Options Considered

The Strategic Planning Committee considered three thematic options for VACNJ's strategic plan, as summarized in Table 1. These options were derived from a mix of Board and staff suggestions, past practices, and review of strategies adopted by comparable organizations.

Option 1: Streamlined and Solvent

This option focuses on a fee for service model, pursuing only programs that generate sufficient income to cover costs, and responding primarily to the market for arts education programming. Exhibitions would be managed to help elevate VACNJ's reputation for excellence.

Option 2: Broaden Access to Transformation

This option maintains the financial strength of Studio School, but focuses on raising funds from a new generation of donors to support broader access to transformative arts programming. This strategy also calls for broadening access to exhibitions, and to development of scholarship programming.

Option 3: Raise Regional Center Profile

This option calls for investment in building a reputation for artistic excellence, both in Studio School and in the community. Community programs would be developed where there is the potential to replicate the same style and quality of programming available at the Studio School, but without specific regard for serving any particular community groups. This option would include targets for increasing the draw of exhibition visitors from further afield, and achieving greater critical acclaim for exhibitions.

Each was evaluated for:

- their feasibility given VACNJ's capabilities,
- their potential to attract a new generation of donors
- their alignment with the interests of current supporters, including donors and Board members
- their potential to lay the ground for future growth, through enhanced profile, impact and capacity to raise funds

Based on this analysis shown in Table 1, the Committee chose to further develop Option 2, Broaden Access to Transformation.

Broad Strategies:	Option 1: Streamlined and Solvent	Option 2: Broaden Access to Transformation	Option 3: Raise Regional Center Profile
Key features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximize paid attendance at Studio School ● Manage gallery to elevate reputation for excellence ● Pursue community opportunities that cover marginal cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Balance paid attendance at Studio School with scholarships ● Manage gallery for excellence, access, and inclusion ● Raise funds for strategic community opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximize paid attendance at Studio School ● Manage gallery to create destination appeal ● Pursue community opportunities that enhance 'excellence'
Match with current capacity			
Match with traditional donors			
Match with new generation of donors			
Potential to lay the ground for future growth			

Table 1: Strategic Options

V. Strategic Direction and Goals

The Visual Art Center's strategy for 2021-2024 focuses on broadening the audience for VACNJ programming, and on channeling financial support to provide access to high quality arts engagement for underserved audiences.

To complement this strategy, we will complete the shift that began in 2007 with our name change, away from presenting and operating as a Summit-based organization, and toward presenting and operating as a regional asset designed to serve the diverse community within 25 miles of Summit.

At the same time, we will continue to act as good stewards of VACNJ assets, ensuring that the organization's reputation and physical assets are well-maintained throughout the period.

This strategy involves pursuing ten related goals, summarized in Table 2, and expanded upon in more detail in the following sections.

Organization Pillar	Strategic Intent	Goals for 2024
Community programs	Develop and grow a pipeline of community partnership programs, significantly increasing impact on underserved groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All current 'developing' programs either become core programs or cease, based on program criteria. 2. New programs development is based on a rubric that looks at impact of program on underserved group and potential for sustainability. 3. Community program budget is \$175-\$200k
Studio School	<p>Continue to provide excellent quality programming and to generate the financial contribution that is essential to the sustainability of the organization.</p> <p>Pursue select, tailored opportunities that deepen the organization's connection to our community partners by welcoming their members to the Studio School.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Three-year average contribution to overhead is at least 27% of revenue 5. Rolling three-year average customer satisfaction is at least 4.5 out of 5 6. All core community programs are considered for related Studio School opportunities, and meaningful opportunities are piloted where funding allows.
Exhibitions	Continue to provide excellent quality programming, exhibiting a wide range of voices that reflect the diversity of the local and near-local community, particularly those with underserved interest in the arts. Pursue an	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. During 2023 and 2024, our curatorial vision continues to broaden to include diverse voices, continuing

	<p>‘everybody once’ approach to each two-year curation cycle.</p> <p>Where funding support allows, conduct focused community outreach, aimed at attracting underserved groups to visit exhibitions that are meaningful to them. Set specific targets for audience engagement as funding opportunities arise.</p>	<p>the Art Center’s tradition of strong representation of black artists and women artists and an increase in artists of Asian and Latin descent.</p> <p>8. Audience engagement is a goal, as funding allows. This audience engagement includes focused community outreach to attract underserved audiences in a meaningful way.</p>
Fund Development and Communications	<p>Cultivate a new generation of individual donors from Summit and the first ring of surrounding towns.</p> <p>Encourage individual giving in support of high-impact programs that broaden access to transformative experiences.</p>	<p>9. Increase total number of individual donors by 20% from the 2019 level</p> <p>10. At least 80% of new donors will come from outside Summit (currently 70%)</p> <p>11. Raise an additional \$60k over three years to support programming that broadens access to transformation</p>
Governance	<p>The Board will create and implement a Board Development plan that broadens the geographic, racial and ethnic reach of the Board; increases the number of formal ambassadors for VACNJ to reach 24-30 within five years; builds strong donor cultivation capability among more Board members</p>	<p>12. Five-year board development plan is in place and 3-year milestones achieved</p>

Table 2: Summary of goals

Strategy for Community Programs

VACNJ's work outside the walls of the physical center are notable for their potential for impact on underserved audiences, as well as for their appeal to potential supporters who learn about them. Over the plan's three years, VACNJ will prioritize developing these programs, and to cultivating private donor support for each program.

VACNJ will develop and grow its pipeline of community programs, significantly increasing impact on underserved groups. By 2024, this arm of VACNJ will grow from 5% to 7% of total budget.

VACNJ will manage existing and new community programs to maximize impact, balanced by financial contribution, as illustrated in Figure 3. Specifically, VACNJ will focus on building financial support for current 'developing' programs, so that by 2024 they have either become financially sustainable, 'core' programs, or they have ceased operating.

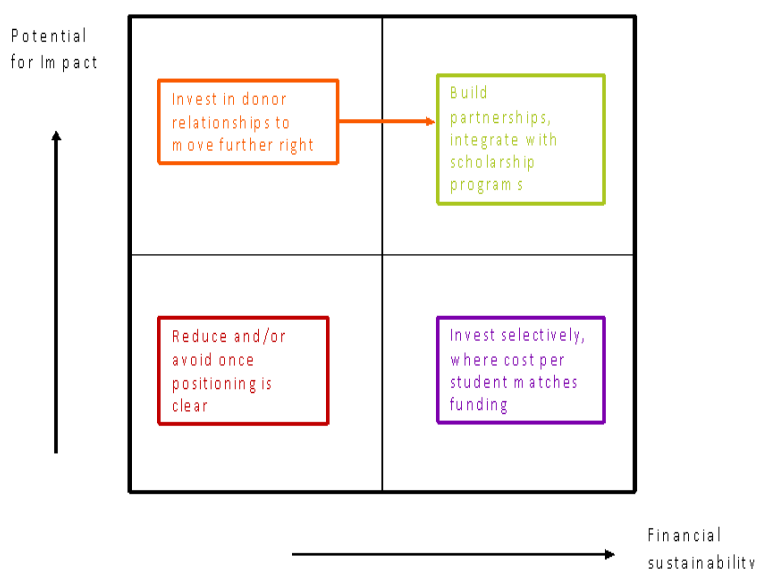


Figure 3: Tool for Evaluation and Prioritization of Community Programs

In this framework, 'Impact' is derived from a combination of three factors:

- High potential for improved quality of life among participants who have restricted access to other options e.g. children of recently arrived immigrants with low incomes would represent higher potential than a mixed class of children in a nearby elementary school.

- Strong partner institution that is likely to remain available for partnering for many years, and that has demonstrated a commitment to building quality programming. Often, a strong partner will offer opportunities for multiple programs that extend over several months.
- Potential to build capacity or support culture change at the partner institution, e.g. through training partner staff in our techniques

‘Financial contribution’ indicates the potential for a pilot program to attract sustained funding after two or three years. Potential sources include:

- Payment by community partner e.g. Elizabeth Public Schools
- Payment through a third party e.g. Veterans Hospital
- Ongoing support from committed donors
- Payment by participants

In order to ensure continued investment in broadening access to transformation, VACNJ will develop and build a “pipeline” of community programs. This will include programs at each stage of development (Pilot, Developing, and Core). Programs at each stage will require different levels of investment of management attention and a different focus for management. Each program will be reviewed for specific criteria, using our scorecard, before moving to the next stage. Figure 4 illustrates this approach.

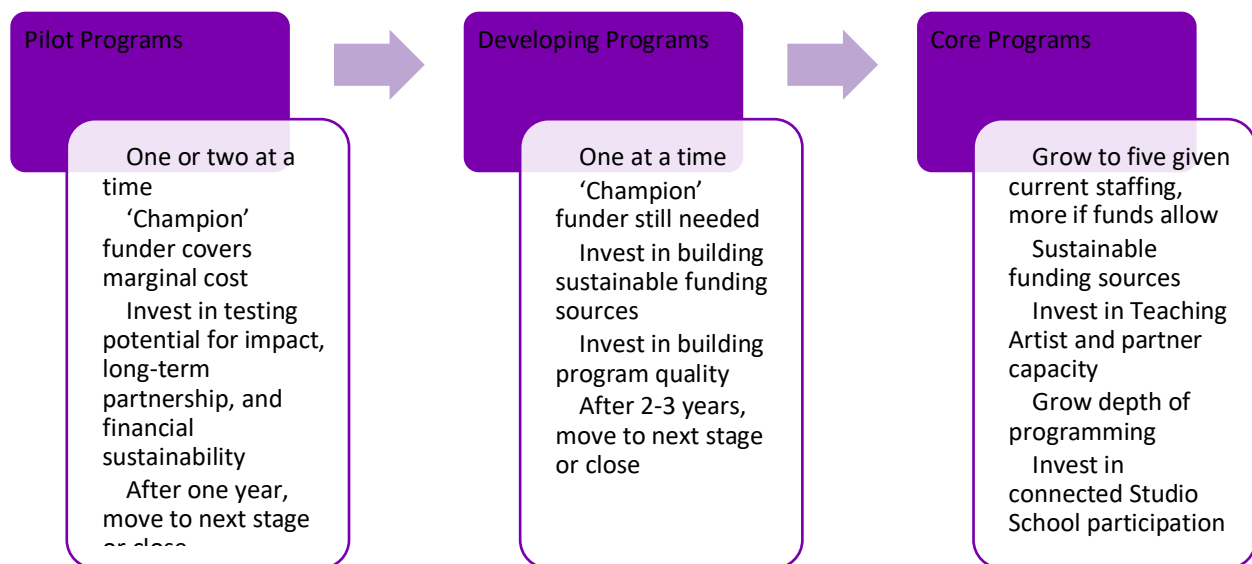
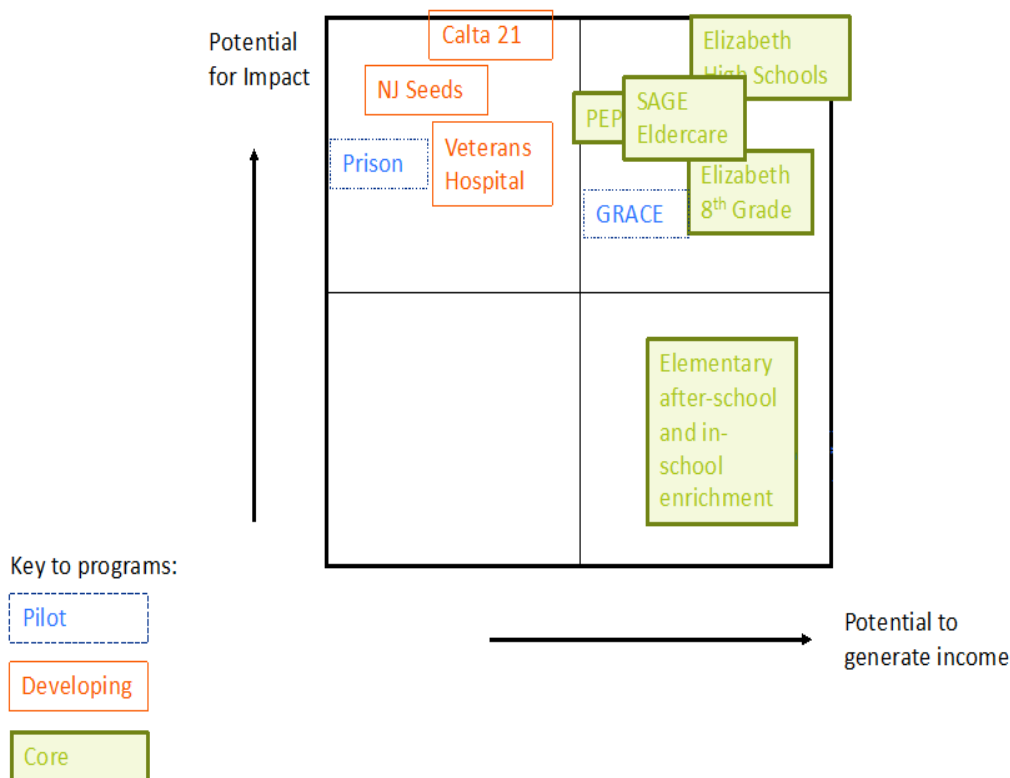


Figure 4: Community Program Pipeline

The starting portfolio of community partner programs is shown in Figure 5

Figure 5: Starting Portfolio of Community Programs



Strategy for Studio School

Studio School is critical to the sustainability of VACNJ for three important reasons:

- Excellent quality arts programming drives VACNJ’s reputation in the region.
- Studio School generates almost all of the contribution to overhead from programs, essential to VACNJ’s financial sustainability, and capacity to expand its impact.
- Studio School’s students develop a strong affinity for the school, and experience first-hand the transformative potential of the arts. As a result, students with the capacity for philanthropy can become our strongest donor prospects.

The format, location and price of Studio School programming does not closely match the needs of underserved audiences, who can typically be more effectively and efficiently reached through community programs. For this reason, our strategy for Studio School is to continue to manage for high quality and financial contribution. Specifically:

- We will maintain a rolling average participant satisfaction level of at least 4.5 out of a maximum of 5 based on our regular surveys.

- Studio School will continue to be the financial engine of the Visual Arts Center, maintaining an annual contribution to overhead of at least 27% of Studio School revenue, comparable to recent successful years.

This plan calls for three areas of action for Studio School, in alignment with our strategy for VACNJ:

- **Align scholarship opportunities with community strategy.** Studio School staff will work with Community Program staff to identify targeted opportunities such as scholarships, internships or tailored programs that deepen the organization's connection to our community partners by welcoming their members to the Studio School. These opportunities will take place on a relatively small scale, but focused on individuals with the potential to gain significantly from engagement. Opportunities may include funding for stipends, transportation and materials as well as class fees. Staff will review each core community program and assess where and how these opportunities can be made to have the greatest impact. For community programs where students are unable to access the VACNJ, we will consider providing committed staff at those institutions with subsidized development opportunities. Within three years, each core program will have been assessed for opportunities to connect with Studio School, and those that appear both impactful and feasible will have been piloted. Once successful pilots have taken place, donors will be offered opportunities to support specific scholarship programs.
- **Commit to welcoming diversity.** Studio School will continue its efforts to be welcoming to the diverse members in the regional community, through regular review of policies and practices. This includes ensuring that marketing communications reflect the diversity of the community, and that best efforts to hire and retain staff – including teaching artists - who reflect the diversity of the community.
- **Expand classroom-based giving.** Studio School students who have paid course and materials fees tend to be reluctant to donate to the VACNJ general fund. However, when students have been asked to help support a specific purchase for the class that they take, they are more likely to want to help. Studio School staff will work with Fund Development staff to identify opportunities for classroom-based giving, either toward equipment or scholarships. This approach is expected to generate \$3-\$7k per year over the life of the plan

Strategy for Exhibitions

Curatorial vision:

Exhibitions will continue to provide high-quality programming, exhibiting a wide range of voices that reflect the diversity of the local and near-local community, particularly those with underserved access to the arts.

Since 2011, 64% of exhibitors have been women and 14% have been of African descent. We intend to continue to emphasize women artists, and to strengthen our commitment to representing a diversity of cultures by increasing the proportion of Asian and Latino artists that we showcase. Since 2011, Asian and Latino artists have each represented about 3% of our total exhibitors.

Our curatorial vision will include an ‘everybody once’ approach to each two-year curation cycle, with a focus on including Asian, Black and Latino visitors.

Exhibition visitors:

Given our location and the historical and cultural traditions of art museums, we recognize that our commitment to diversity in our curatorial vision alone is unlikely to result in a significant shift in the demographics of our audience.

The fullest expression of our strategy of ‘broadening access to transformation’ would include significantly growing and diversifying the audience that our exhibitions attract. Bringing in new audiences will require an investment in staff time to cultivate community relationships and support group visits.

Since our top priority over the plan’s three years is to build our pipeline of community partnership programs and because our resources are limited, we are making a strategic decision to place a lower priority on diversifying exhibition audiences compared to building community programs. We note that community programs are one of our most targeted ways to bring diverse audiences that often face transportation barriers to the museum for visits. We will remain open to funding opportunities that allow us to invest more resources to diversifying museum audiences.

VACNJ will offer donors the opportunity to support initiatives that increase access for specific underserved groups. Such initiatives might include guided tours, assistance with transportation, events, and complementary programming. We will apply this funding to conduct focused community outreach, each effort being associated with specific targets for scale and demographics of audience engagement.

Strategy for Fund Development and Communications

VACNJ's fund development strategy needs to respond to the shifting demographics and interests of its natural donor base – higher-income individuals with an interest in the arts. At the same time, VACNJ has the opportunity to channel support towards specific programming that broadens access to the transformative power of arts programming to underserved community groups.

VACNJ will embark on a three-year program to cultivate a new generation of individual donors from Summit and the first ring of towns surrounding Summit. This program will result in a 20% increase (about 67 additional donors per year or about 200 over 3 years) in the number of annual individual donors over the period from FY 2019 through the end of FY 2024. We also expect to see a shift in the geographical balance of our donors by increasing the number of new donors coming from beyond Summit by an additional 10%.

To achieve this growth, VACNJ will embark on an active donor cultivation plan, engaging both staff and board. Figure 6 shows how the number of donors will grow over the period.

In order to achieve this increase in new donors, we will need to engage 1000 donors each year (an average of 10% more than currently). Ultimately, we expect this plan to result in 10 new major donors per year (gift of \$5000 or over), as shown in Figure 7. We will build potential donors' affinity for the Arts Center, and for Exhibitions and Events, as our primary means of garnering their support for community programs in the future.

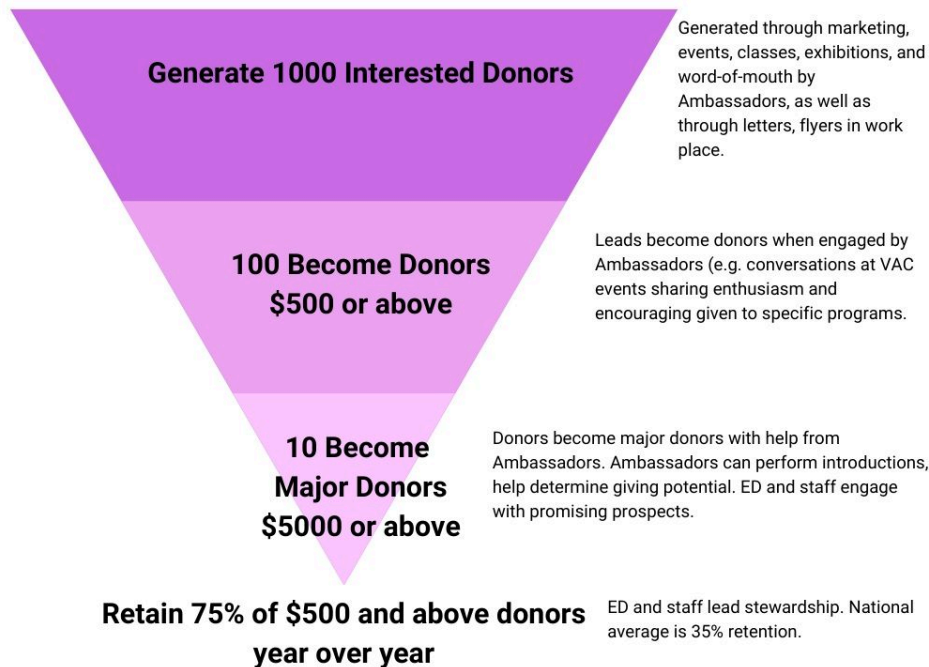


Figure 6: Donor cultivation funnel

Over the three years of this plan, we aim to raise an additional \$60k specifically to support programming that broadens access to transformation, through community programming, targeted scholarship opportunities and focused outreach to exhibition visitors. An important part of achieving this goal is to make donors feel valued by all members of the organization, staff and board alike, and to let them know that their gift makes a difference.

Strategy for Governance

This strategic plan calls for VACNJ’s Board of Trustees to dedicate substantial efforts to donor cultivation and retention and to help create an organizational culture focused on relationship management, in keeping with practices of today’s successful arts institutions. According to Boardsource:

“Board members are essential to successful community outreach and advocacy, but they have more work to do. According to the 2017 Leading with Intent report, 43 percent of chief executives and 42 percent of board chairs include outreach efforts and acting as ambassadors for the organization as one of the three areas most in need of board improvement.

Strong board leadership is not just about checks and balances; it is about creating the circumstances that will allow nonprofits' missions to be achieved. To be passionate, articulate, and effective champions for their missions, board members ... need to be educated about the board's role in advocacy and provided appropriate support and resources to become ambassadors for their organizations."

This strategic plan will require a shift over time in the scale and composition of the Board of Trustees and in the expectations of individual trustees. Specifically:

- **Increase the number of Board Members over time until there are approximately 25 named ambassadors for the VACNJ.** The Governance Committee might want to consider alternative structures to achieve 25 ambassadors.
- **Broaden geographic, racial and ethnic make-up of the Board.** VACNJ needs Board Members to introduce new donors; diversifying the social circles in which Board Members move will help grow the number of donors and meet the goal of broadening the geographical footprint of donors.
- **Work with Development Staff to create and implement a process for pursuing development "touchpoints" for major donors and cultivation targets.** The Development Committee in conjunction with Development staff would likely lead this effort.
- **Set expectations for existing and new board members that they should engage as ambassadors to help with donor cultivation.** Training will be needed to increase the number of Board members who are prepared and equipped to engage actively to support donor cultivation.

The Governance Committee will create and implement a Board Development plan that broadens the geographic, racial and ethnic reach of the Board increasing the number of formal board ambassadors for VACNJ to reach approximately 25 people within five years. The Development Committee will develop a Donor Cultivation Plan to build strong donor cultivation capability among more Board members. This strategic plan spans three years; however, it is recognized that these board plans will likely take up to five years to fully implement.

Alongside efforts to direct more private donations towards community programming, appropriate funds will be set aside to preserve tangible and in-tangible assets, such as current and future repairs to the Art Center's building infrastructure.

Opportunities Outside Current Focus

In order to pursue the strategy described above, we need to make trade-offs. These are opportunities that are broadly in line with our mission, but we do not plan to make a priority in the life of this plan:

- We will stop running community partnership programs that do not meet the requirements described in our approach to management of our program pipeline.
- We will continue to operate programs such as Pingry, as long as they generate significant margins, but we will not prioritize growing or adding to these opportunities.
- We will not invest unrestricted funds in diversifying our audience for exhibitions; we will offer donors the opportunity to support this work, and match our efforts to donor interest.
- We will not invest unrestricted funds in scholarship places at Studio School; we will offer donors the opportunity to support scholarships, and match scholarship initiatives to community programs. We will continue to apply the endowment we have available for scholarships to this purpose.
- We will not set specific goals for diversifying attendees at Studio School, though we will pursue staffing and communications policies that signal an environment welcoming to all.

VI. Implications for Capacity and Organization

The overall strategy for VACNJ provides for modest growth of community programs, and in fund development efforts. These growth plans will be executed by current staff, with any growth in staff capacity accompanied by new sources of income. Key areas where a change in practice or strengthening of current practices is required are highlighted here.

Marketing

VACNJ will need to review its messaging to students, community and potential donors to ensure messaging is aligned with strategic intent. In particular, messaging associated with fund development should focus on opportunities to support programming for underserved audiences, while messaging to students should reinforce quality, value, and accessibility of programs to all. Modest investment of \$2-\$3k per year will be needed to support this.

Board Development

The Governance and Development Committees will need to create a Board Development plan and Donor Cultivation plan, respectively, to meet the goals set out in this Strategic Plan.

Additional staff for Development

As fund development efforts yield success, additional staffing will be needed to optimize development efforts. Careful consideration should be given to optimizing staff in consideration of increased giving.

Additional staff for Education and Community Programs

Where dedicated funding allows, additional staffing may be needed to develop and oversee community partnerships, and to conduct outreach to underserved communities with the intent of providing access to arts experiences both at the VACNJ and community.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

VACNJ recognizes that adult students in its studio school programs and museum attendees outside of community program participants reflect a predominantly white, middle-aged demographic.

Given this, VACNJ needs to take ongoing, positive action to ensure that all its programming is welcoming to our diverse community. In particular, staff should reflect the area population, and the youth we serve in studio school and community programs. As with other arts organizations with a history of white-dominant culture that are aiming to be more inclusive, a regular review of policies, practices and messaging is essential. Our annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals reflect continued work on goals set out in this plan.

VII. Financial Implications

This plan calls for modest budget growth, around 10% over three years, chiefly in the area of community programming. Growth in the community programming budget will track growth in donations and contract income.

	FY19	FY21	FY22	FY23
INCOME				
Tuition*	\$ 1,426,161.00	\$ 1,557,571.00	\$ 1,557,571.00	\$ 1,557,571.00
Contributions	\$ 280,248.00	\$ 290,000.00	\$ 300,000.00	\$ 310,000.00
Government Grants	\$ 123,342.00	\$ 123,342.00	\$ 123,342.00	\$ 123,342.00
Special Events (net of expenses with direct benefit to donor)	\$ 263,549.00	\$ 263,549.00	\$ 263,549.00	\$ 263,549.00
Membership	\$ 46,126.00	\$ 46,126.00	\$ 46,126.00	\$ 46,126.00
Fee for Service	\$ 44,981.00	\$ 44,981.00	\$ 44,981.00	\$ 44,981.00
Misc	\$ 3,257.00	\$ 3,257.00	\$ 3,257.00	\$ 3,257.00
Net Assets Released from Restriction**	\$ 208,197.00	\$ 207,489.00	\$ 207,489.00	\$ 207,489.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,395,861.00	\$ 2,536,315.00	\$ 2,546,315.00	\$ 2,556,315.00
EXPENSE				
Studio School Program***	\$ 1,108,796.00	\$ 1,163,996.00	\$ 1,163,996.00	\$ 1,163,996.00
Education & Community Programs	\$ 114,004.00	\$ 145,000.00	\$ 160,000.00	\$ 175,000.00
Museum Program****	\$ 368,484.00	\$ 405,753.00	\$ 405,753.00	\$ 405,753.00
Admin Overhead	\$ 565,273.00	\$ 565,273.00	\$ 565,273.00	\$ 565,273.00
Fundraising (less cost of direct benefits to donors)	\$ 238,413.00	\$ 238,413.00	\$ 238,413.00	\$ 238,413.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,394,970.00	\$ 2,518,435.00	\$ 2,533,435.00	\$ 2,548,435.00

Notes

- * Tuition is higher in FY21 because of an increase put into affect in FY20
 ** Net Assets Released for FY21-23 is an average based on the years of FY17-FY19
 *** Increase in cost is taking into consideration change in minimum wage
 **** Museum Program cost is based on past normally staffed years
 FY19 shows historic real numbers. FY20 is our current FY ending June 30 and so is left out of these projections.

Figure 7

VIII. Implementation Steps

- Curatorial staff to create a plan for increasing representation of artists of Hispanic and Asian descent in exhibitions
- Development staff to work with program staff to develop a “menu” of program support opportunities, including a characterization of the expected impact of each.
- Revise and formalize the program evaluation ‘scorecard’ to facilitate ongoing portfolio management in line with plan goals
- Governance Committee to create a five-year Board Development plan to achieve the planned transition in Board scale, make-up and expectations
- Development Committee to expand its focus to include donor cultivation, beginning with a plan for board training and engagement.
- Development staff to develop a plan, in consultation with the Development Committee, to attract donors from the ring of towns beyond Summit, focusing on reaching diverse potential donors.
- Buildings and Grounds Committee along with Building Manager create a plan to do an infrastructure survey in order to understand and fiscally plan for future building repairs.
- Organize training for Board Members in donor cultivation.
- Revise language used in VACNJ materials, eliminating the term “outreach” except where it specifically refers to the activity of contacting new audiences with the intent of

cultivating participants, donors or visitors. Adopt language that distinguishes between programs, not according to the population served, but according to the location or nature of the program. Consider changes in titles and department names to reflect the new use of in-community programs and community partnerships.

- Ensure that staff hiring policies continue to ensure that staff – including teaching artists – reflect the diversity of the community that we serve.

Appendix A

Details of research conducted:

Interviews:

- Jan Nicholson and Barbara McFaddyen, Nicholson Foundation
- Heather Barbieri, Grunin Foundation
- Jordan Glatt, New Jersey Community Foundation
- Pam Shipley, donor
- Joe Robinson, donor, Board Member

Two focus groups of VACNJ donors, total attendance 10

Board input meeting, total attendance 11

Review of four years' financial statements

Review of VACNJ knowledge base

Evaluation of other research and organizations:

- The National Attitudes, Awareness, and Usage Study, IMPACTS
- Newark Museum of Art, NJ
- Arts Council of Princeton, NJ
- Spelman College Museum, GA
- Akwaaba Gallery, NJ
- Lawrence Art Center, KS
- Urbano, MA