



2025 2028

Visual Arts Center of New Jersey

Strategic Plan

Art and healing pottery workshop
with care team members at
Overlook Medical Center.





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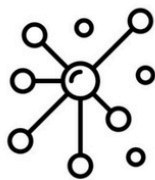
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Executive Summary

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey is a longstanding, vital resource for the arts, providing transformative visual arts programming, fostering meaningful partnerships with mission-aligned organizations. As part of its 2025–2028 Strategic Plan (beginning May 2025 and running through May 2028), the Art Center aims to amplify its role as a hub for arts and culture, positioning itself as an "arts anchor institution." This vision reflects the Art Center's commitment to strengthening its impact in Summit, surrounding communities, and the state of New Jersey as a whole.

Arts anchor institutions are distinguished by their stability, direct programming, and strong relationships that enable them to enhance collective community efforts. The Art Center will embrace this role through three focus areas: maximizing arts education as a mechanism for empowerment, strengthening the Art Center's exhibitions as a lever for experiential learning, and enhancing the Art Center's arts and healing practice to nurture healthy communities.

This Strategic Plan represents a clear roadmap to enable the Art Center to adapt to evolving community needs and continue to grow its impact for years to come.



Fully embrace VACNJ's role as an
arts anchor institution by ...



Maximizing arts education as a mechanism for **empowerment**.



Strengthening VACNJ's exhibitions as a lever for **experiential learning**.



Enhancing VACNJ's **arts and healing** practice to nurture healthy communities.

Artist Elana Herzog speaking about her work in the exhibition *Elana Herzog: Ripped, Tangled, and Frayed*



About the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey



The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey is a contemporary art museum and studio school that has fostered creativity, learning, and connection for over 90 years. We believe in the transformative power of art and its ability to build community.

The Art Center's museum exhibitions showcase a diverse array of contemporary artists. Each year, we present six to eight exhibitions, inviting our audiences to encounter new perspectives, challenge assumptions, and engage with the art of our time.

Our studio school welcomes more than 4,600 children, teens, and adults each year, offering over 450 classes, workshops, and camps annually. Our studio school programs include traditional disciplines like painting, drawing, ceramics, and sculpture. Classes are designed to meet students wherever they are on their creative journey.

Our community programs reach beyond our walls to serve more than 4,700 individuals annually through two key program arms: Arts and Healing and K-12 Education. These initiatives provide meaningful art experiences to at-risk youth, veterans, older adults, people with disabilities, and English language learners.

Through it all, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey remains a place of exploration, growth, and connection. By uniting education, community outreach, and contemporary art, we endeavor to foster a more inclusive, inspired, and vibrant world.

About the Planning Process

In early 2024, the Arts Center partnered with Orchid Root Strategies, a New Jersey-based consultancy, to lead a strategic planning process guided by a Strategic Planning Committee of 12 staff and board members. An early meeting focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion was led by Debika Shome of Marigold Strategy. Through multiple meetings with the Committee and the full Board of Directors, data collected from internal and external stakeholders was reviewed to shape mission-driven goals, values, and focus areas for the next three years. Acknowledging the organization's stable finances, experienced leadership, talented team, and strong reputation for transformative arts experiences, the process confirmed the Art Center's positive impact while identifying opportunities to enhance and sustain its work.

To ensure successful implementation, small working groups developed detailed plans with clear objectives, strategies, required resources, and an evaluation framework. The resulting bold goal, focus areas, and objectives align leadership, staff, teaching artists, and partners around the Art Center's strategic priorities, providing a roadmap for effectively directing its energy and resources toward community impact.



Vision

To create an inclusive and welcoming community where lives are transformed and enriched through the shared experience of art.

Mission

The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey nurtures the capacity for personal expression, expands the creative experience, and fosters stronger communities by empowering people to see, make, and learn about art.



Values

In our work, we embrace the following values:

Connection: We foster connection among our community members through a respectful and safe environment.

Inclusive Community: We welcome and value diverse backgrounds and viewpoints, and nurture an environment that is open and supportive.

Excellence: We are committed to providing outstanding services and programs. We direct our collective efforts to continually improve and innovate.

Curiosity & Creative Risk-Taking: We value receptivity, open dialogue, and innovative thinking, so as to encourage curiosity and creative risk-taking.

Holistic Approach: We value a holistic approach to art in the individual and community life, so that art is found in every facet of life.

Advocacy: We value standing up and speaking out for the arts, in order to promote our vision and values.

Our Bold Goal

Grow the capacity for the Art Center to fully realize, embrace, and communicate its role as an arts anchor institution



The Art Center has a long history of investing in its artistic community through visual arts programming, partnerships with mission-aligned organizations, and arts leadership throughout the region. Based on the feedback from a variety of stakeholders throughout the strategic planning process, the most impactful step forward for the Art Center is to more fully invest in its role as a hub for arts and culture in Summit, the surrounding communities, and throughout New Jersey: to serve as an “arts anchor institution.”

Arts anchors are well-established institutions within their communities, known for consistently effective direct service programming, and, through strong relationships within its community, the ability to enhance the collective efforts of community organizations, often through strategic alliances, centralized communication, and convenings. As an arts anchor institution, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey will continue to foster creativity, advocate for the arts, promote community engagement, and contribute to the economic vitality of the communities we serve.

While the Art Center's embodiment of its role as an arts anchor will undoubtedly be driven by the impact it has through its three programmatic areas (studio school, community programs, and exhibitions), this Bold Goal also provides a "North Star" for how the Art Center can continue to build the organizational capacity and infrastructure that supports its programs.

We anticipate this Bold Goal will be achieved by accomplishing the three focus areas and the following capacity building objectives:

Objective 1: Assess the need for physical space to support the strategy of being an arts anchor.

Objective 2: Develop strategies to use the "Art Center as Art Anchor" message to deepen existing funding and expand our sources of funding by attracting donors with aligned priorities and/or in new geographic areas.

Objective 3: Strengthen leadership of the Board of Trustees and staff by diversifying experience and investing in professional development, enhancing expertise and cultural competency to support the Art Center's role as an art anchor.

Objective 4: Cultivate partnerships within the New Jersey art ecosystem.



Focus Area #1

Maximizing arts education as a mechanism for empowerment

Empowerment is central to the Art Center's work. We recognize that through arts education, we have the opportunity not only to provide artists with the technical skills and abilities to create art, but also to enrich individual's lives through personal growth, creative self-expression, and enhanced resiliency, among other qualities. At the Art Center, we define arts education broadly to include the various ways people can connect with art and be inspired by it. This includes direct formal instruction as in our classes and through guided and self-guided tours of art on view, as well as other opportunities.

While we are proud to have a long track record for empowerment through arts education, we recognize the opportunity to strengthen our impact, ensuring all Art Center leaders, staff, teaching artists, and volunteers are fully equipped to empower our artists, and that our community knows to look to the Art Center for deep, empowering arts education experiences.

We anticipate Focus Area #1 will be achieved by accomplishing the following objectives:

Objective 1: Develop an internal culture around the shared value that art education empowers.

Objective 2: Develop an external culture around the shared value that art education empowers.



Focus Area #2

Leveraging the Art Center's exhibitions for experiential learning

In the same way the Art Center seeks to empower through its arts education, it also seeks to provide transformative gallery spaces that center the visitors' perspective. Experiential learning places learners as active participants at the core of the educational process. In the context of a museum environment, experiential learning is visitor-centric, encouraging active engagement and meaningful interaction with the content. The learning process is guided by visitors' interests and needs, allowing them to shape the topics explored. Museum educators facilitate this by using open-ended questions and prompts, fostering thoughtful responses that reflect visitors' perspectives. Curatorial practices accommodate diverse forms of engagement, influenced by the characteristics of different kinds of learners, artistic contexts, and the priorities of artists. This visitor-centered approach empowers visitors, granting them autonomy and ensuring that their experience with artworks is both direct and immersive.

We anticipate Focus Area #2 will be achieved by accomplishing the following objectives:

Objective 1: Design visitor-centric exhibitions for effective experiential learning.

Objective 2: Develop comprehensive educational programming implementing experiential learning.



Focus Area #3

Enhancing the Art Center's art and healing practice to nurture healthy communities

In the past few years, the Art Center has developed a robust art and healing practice, connecting New Jersey's most vulnerable populations with meaningful artistic experiences. Much of this work has emerged organically through collaborations with schools and other nonprofits throughout the region, identifying how the Art Center's programming can be most effective and for whom. Building on these early successes, we seek to further actualize this opportunity by advancing the community's understanding of the benefits of art and healing practice and leaning into our position as a leader within the community.

We anticipate Focus Area #3 will be achieved by accomplishing the following objectives:

Objective 1: Continue developing our current arts and healing programs to maximize participation and increase impact.

Objective 2: Educate our broader audience on the health benefits of art.

Objective 3: Take a leadership role in providing and promoting art therapy in the state of New Jersey.



Elizabeth High School student reflecting
on the exhibition *Samanta Batra Mehta:
Search for the Empyrean*



Appendix

Key Terms

Art Anchor: As an arts anchor institution, the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey fosters creativity, advocates for the arts, promotes community engagement, and contributes to the economic vitality of the communities we serve.

Arts Education: Arts education includes myriad ways individuals connect with and are inspired by art. This includes direct formal art instruction, guided and self-guided tours of art on view, informal art making, and participating in art discussions or lectures.

Art Therapist: Art therapists are mental health professionals who use art and art making to help people improve their health and wellbeing. Art therapy uses art media as its main mode of expression and communication.

Direct Interaction Experiences: Direct interaction experiences offer opportunities to deepen one's understanding of the exhibition beyond simply viewing the art in the gallery. Examples include programming such as workshops and artist talks, as well as additional materials/take aways within the exhibition design that connect to the themes or specific works displayed, like writing or drawing prompts.

Empowerment: Successful arts education results in empowerment by enriching individuals' lives through personal growth, creative self-expression, and enhanced resiliency, among other qualities.

Experiential Learning: Experiential learning places learners as active participants at the core of the educational process, emphasizing engagement and meaningful interaction with content. In a museum environment, this approach is visitor-centric, empowering them to shape their experiences based on their interests and needs. Through open-ended questions and prompts, museum educators and staff facilitate thoughtful responses that reflect visitors' perspectives. Curatorial practices adapt to diverse forms of engagement, accommodating different types of learners, artistic contexts, and artists' priorities. This visitor-centered approach ensures that interactions with artworks are both direct and immersive, fostering autonomy and meaningful exploration.

External Culture: How the Art Center's external visitors experience the organization and its brand. External visitors include anyone who participates in the Art Center's programs, classes and/or exhibitions, such as Studio School students, programs participants, exhibition visitors, and the general public during community events.

Internal Culture: The Art Center's values, beliefs, behaviors, and processes that influence how staff, volunteers, exhibiting artists, and board members interact, make decisions, and approach their work.

Marginalized Groups: Groups of people who have been systematically excluded, disadvantaged, or oppressed due to social, economic, political, or cultural factors. Marginalization can impact access to resources, opportunities, and rights, resulting in reduced social, economic, or political power.

Teaching Artist: The Association of Teaching Artists describes a teaching artist as "a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills and sensibilities of an educator, who engages people in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts."

Visitor-Centric: This positions the visitor at the center of the learning experience. The core of this approach is allowing museum visitors to choose where to place their attention, with the goal of giving them greater agency in their appreciation of content.

Volunteers: Any person contributing their service without pay to further the functioning of the Art Center. Volunteers include board members, people working in administrative offices, and those working in an Art Center program, exhibition, or class.

Vulnerable Populations: A vulnerable population in healthcare is a group of people who are at higher risk of health problems and health disparities. These groups face barriers to accessing and receiving quality healthcare services.

Team & Methodologies

Orchid Root Strategies:

Tim Hausmann

Naomi Polin

Marigold Strategy:

Debika Shome

VACNJ Strategic Planning Committee:

Greg Adams

Rachel Aponte

Lisa Butler

Melanie Cohn

Cassandra Demski

Anne Grissinger

Amy Harris

Jordan Horton

Vani Krishnamurthy

Andre Renaudo

Debi Schwarzmman

Jess Van Nostrand

Phases of Work

Phase 1: Grounding the Inquiry – April-June 2024

The goals for this phase were to ensure alignment on the strategic planning process, enable the consultant to become deeply familiar with the Art Center's programming, operations, and strategic positioning, explore potential updates to the Art Center's vision and mission, and gain a preliminary understanding of strategic directions for further exploration in Phase 2.

April

- **Logistics/Planning Call:** Held a call with the Executive Director to discuss logistics, timing, roles, and more. Bi-weekly check-ins with the Executive Director, Board Chair, and Consultant focused on project logistics, data collection planning, and high-level content discussions.
- **Document Review:** Reviewed the Art Center's organizational documents, including past strategic plans, budget, program descriptions, and evaluations.
- **Strategic Planning Committee Kick-Off Meeting:** Conducted a 2-hour Zoom meeting to align on planning logistics and outcomes, and began clarifying the major strategic questions, including potential vision and mission updates.

May

- **Internal Interviews:** Conducted 3–4 interviews with Art Center leadership and board members to gather individual perspectives and goals, building on the 2023 visioning process.
- **Board and Staff DEI Meeting:** Held a 3-hour in-person meeting led by DEI consultant Debika Shome to align on terminology, discuss the Art Center's role in advancing equity, identify potential areas of harm, and explore ways for the Board and staff to address these issues.

June

- **Strategic Planning Committee & Full Board Retreat #1:** Facilitated a 3-hour in-person retreat to present emerging themes and identify 3–5 priorities or directions to vet and clarify in Phase 2.

Phase 2: Clarifying the Art Center's Direction – June-September 2024

This phase focused on exploring, vetting, and clarifying potential strategic pathways identified in Phase 1, leading to decisions on directions for the next 3–5 years. Primary and secondary data collection informed these decisions.

June

- **Phase 2 Kick-Off Meeting:** Held a 1-hour Zoom meeting with the Strategic Planning Committee to align on Phase 2 logistics, check progress, and draft a data collection plan.
- **Data Collection Planning:** Partnered with project liaisons to develop and refine data collection tools.

June-July

- Data Collection Execution: Conducted primary data collection, including interviews and three focus groups (8 hours total), and completed 4 hours of secondary research.

July-August

- Data Analysis: Synthesized and analyzed collected data, organizing it for Board and staff review to support decision-making.

September

- Strategic Planning Committee & Full Board Retreat #2: Facilitated a 3-hour in-person retreat to discuss data themes, update vision and mission as needed, and determine 2–4 strategic goals or focus areas for the plan.

Phase 3: Plan Development – September-December 2024

Building on decisions from Phase 2, this phase focused on drafting the strategic plan and coaching Board and staff to develop an implementation roadmap.

September-December

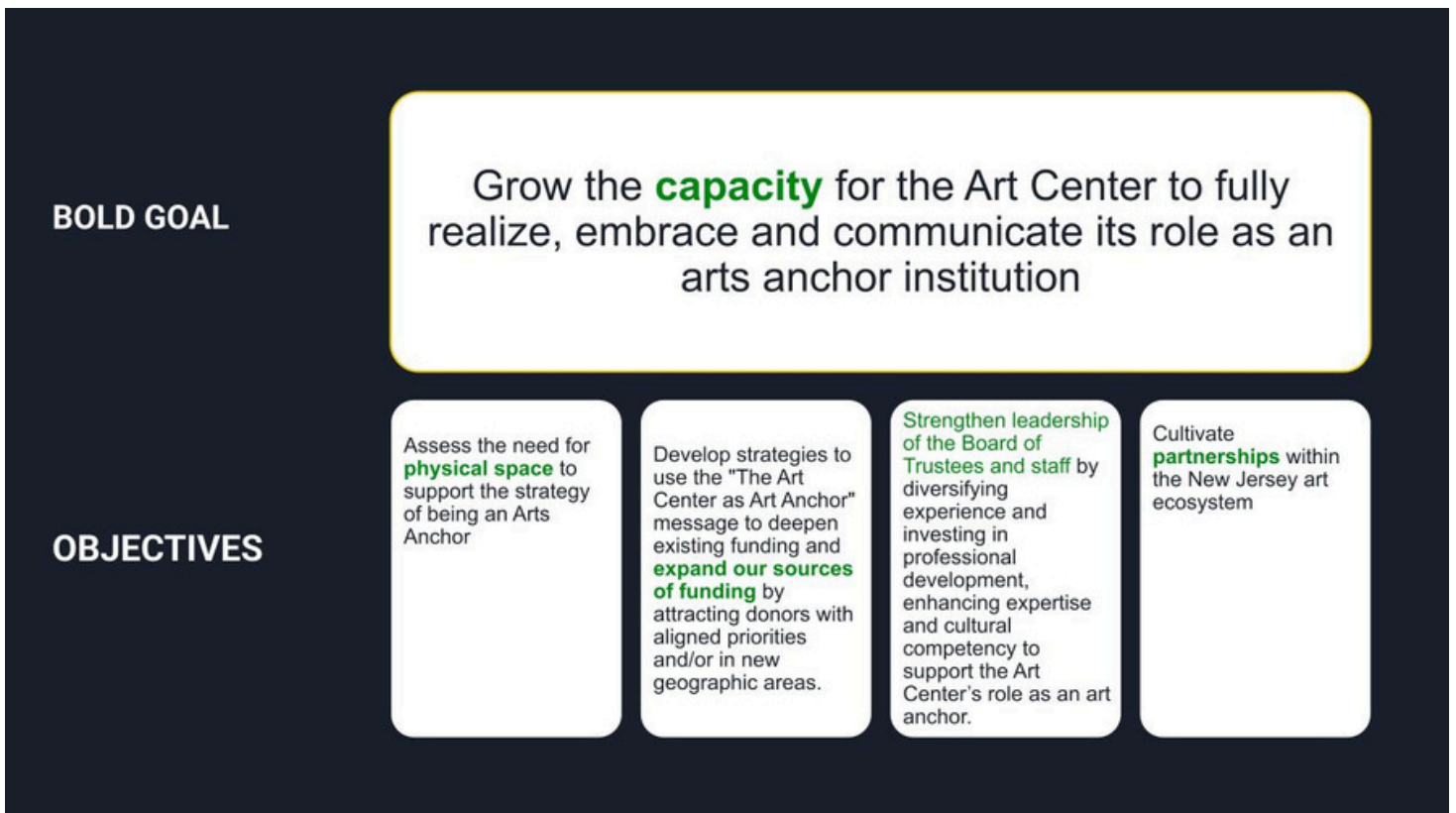
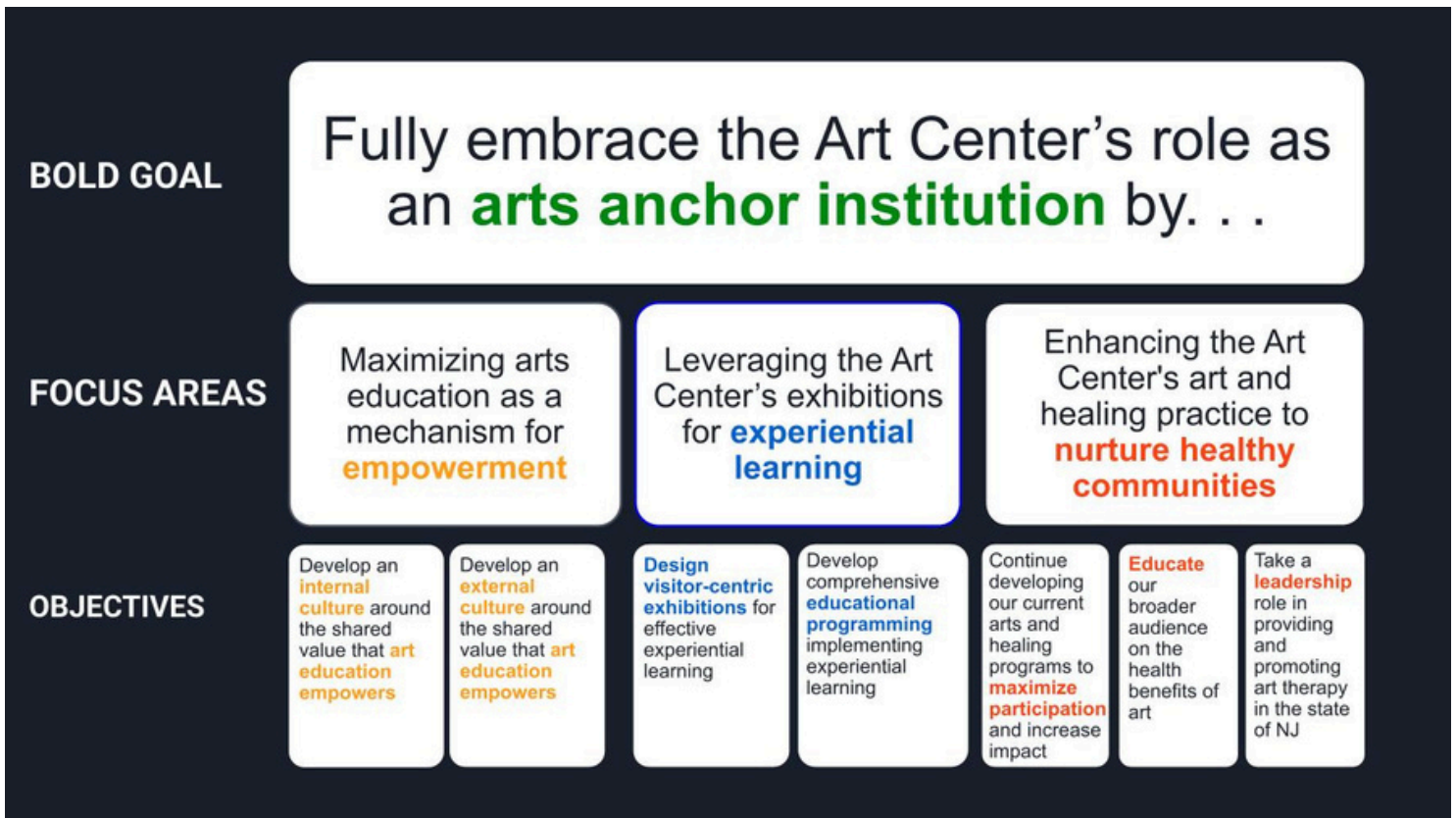
- Action Plan Creation: The Strategic Planning Committee broke into four groups in order to work on each area, developing objectives and action plans with measurable outcomes to ensure successful implementation.
- Strategic Plan Writing: Consultant partnered with the Strategic Planning Committee to construct a succinct written strategic plan document.

January-February

- Strategic Plan brought to the Strategic Planning Committee for review and approval.
- Strategic Plan brought to the full board by the Strategic Planning Committee for review and approval

Action Plan

The Action Plan is broken down by objective for the Broad Goal and each of the three Focus Areas. The following pages offer a guide to the implementation steps. The full worksheets can be found at <https://bit.ly/4aCocBi>



FAI: Maximizing arts education as a mechanism for **empowerment** **Objective 1:**
Develop an **internal culture** around the shared value that art education empowers

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Art Center staff, board members, teaching artists, and volunteers embrace and share a consistent message about the impact of the Art Center's education.	1: Board Members can articulate how the Art Center's education work impacts learners, visitors, and participants across all pillars.	Develop a concise and research-based explanation of the impact of arts education to set the mindset of how art education empowers. Onboarding for new board members includes education on the impact of arts education. Mission moments will be included in every board meeting to illustrate how the Art Center's art education impacts learners and staff.
	2: Administrative Staff measure success by the impact they make on program participants/learners.	Onboarding for new staff includes education about the impact of arts education. Develop an internal communications plan targeted to educate all staff, volunteers, teaching artists, learners and exhibiting artists how "art education empowers." Staff meetings include time to highlight examples of high impact art education, including "mission moments" and recognition for staff members who embodied the value that "art education empowers."
	3: Teaching Staff can articulate how they connect their work to the shared purpose of impacting learners as art educators.	Emphasize Customer Relations staff role as front line ambassadors of our culture. Annual staff reviews includes discussion of how staff measures impact and determine steps to better align with desired mindset of art education empowering. Onboarding for new teaching staff includes education about the impact of arts education. Recognize teaching staff for their teaching work based on outcomes of the program participants/learners.
	4: Volunteers can articulate how they connect their work to the shared purpose of impacting learners as art educators.	Identify and communicate opportunities for professional growth for teaching staff that are focused on education strategies and best practices. Onboarding for new volunteers includes education about the impact of arts education.

FAI: Maximizing arts education as a mechanism for **empowerment** **Objective 2:**
Develop an **external culture** around the shared value that art education empowers

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Art Center members, learners, community program participants, museum visitors, donors, and the broader community receive consistent messaging about the Art Center's work and impact through arts education.	1: Program participants, learners, and visitors articulate art as a tool of empowerment.	Include community program participants in communications strategy so that they can share the impact that art education at the Art Center has had on them. Scholarship application periods are communicated to community program participants, studio school learners and museum visitors.
	2: VACNJ marketing materials include the message that art education empowers	Develop a communications plan that positions the Art Center as an art anchor that empowers our region, especially underserved communities, fosters socio-economic and cultural vitality, and promotes healthy communities. Focus on the goal of increasing the awareness that "art education empowers." Implement the communications plan consistently across all departments of the Art Center through external communications.
Community members consider community programs, Studio School classes, and exhibitions as impactful arts education experiences.	3: Studio School students, community programs participants, and exhibition visitors view the Art Center as a place that empowers learners, not just a place to simply learn a technical skill or look at art.	Include Studio School learners and exhibiting artists in communications strategy so that they can share and buy-into the impact that art education at the Art Center has had on them.
	4: Scholarship opportunities are available to increase access to arts education.	Community programs partners are invited to all community programs (like MLK day) to continue engagement.

FA2: Leveraging the Art Center's exhibitions for **experiential learning**
Objective 1: **Design** visitor-centric exhibitions for effective **experiential learning**

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Visitors experience curiosity about art in a personally meaningful way.	1: Visitors can articulate how exhibitions or artworks within an exhibition have a personal meaning to them.	Implement thematic exhibitions that encourage audience participation and exploration. Create and distribute takeaways of exhibitions to support continued experiential learning of exhibitions without catalogs.
Exhibitions reflect and integrate community's experiences .	2: Fall and Spring exhibits use community advisory panels or other modes of gather community feedback in the planning and development of exhibits	Curate an exhibition program that reflects the exhibition visitors' experiences and introduce them to new experiences and reflect trends and relevant topics in the art world. Expand ways to conduct community surveys/advisory groups to understand interests and incorporate feedback into exhibition planning. Deepen connections with teaching artists to design and implement programs that connect artmaking with community themes and interests and shifts authority to the visitor.
Art Center exhibits foster engagement in gallery-centered learning through the direct interaction experience with works of art .	3: Every exhibition season includes an opportunity for visitors to have moments of direct interaction with works of art	Design interactive installations that invite visitors to have the autonomy to interpret works for themselves and engage with the works through exhibit design, educational activities or by using sound, touch, taste, and smell.
Art Center galleries encourage visitors' curiosity and open dialogue .	4: Visitors engaged in programs or tours can articulate that they were invited to ask questions and share their ideas	Organize artist-led workshops and discussions during exhibitions.

FA2: Leveraging the Art Center's exhibitions for **experiential learning**
Objective 2: Develop comprehensive **educational programming** implementing **experiential learning**

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Art Center exhibition programs center the participant experience and participants feel empowered and engaged.	1: Participants in exhibit programs can articulate how the program empowered them.	Admin staff, docents and community program teaching artists are trained to empower exhibit visitors. Docent training facilitates engaging tours that allow for visitor reflection and interaction, considerate of different learners, ages, expertise.
Art Center staff and volunteers understand and embrace experiential learning and effectively implement it.	2: Art Center staff and teaching staff & volunteers develop expertise on experiential learning strategies.	Create a toolbox of experiential learning strategies for community program teaching artists & docents and update it regularly with new techniques. Revise the education plan to incorporate experiential elements in current exhibitions and continued staff training for outcome #2. Educate staff on new techniques to apply experiential learning strategies in internal meetings and communications.

FA3: Enhancing the Art Center's art and healing practice to **nurture healthy communities.** **Objective 1:** Continue **developing our current arts and healing programs** to **maximize participation and increase impact**

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Participation increases in existing art and healing programs.	1: The average number of participants in art and healing programs increases.	Create & implement a collaborative plan with partner organization to grow participation in current programs.
Art and healing programs accomplish their goals as indicated by previously established evaluation metrics.	2: Using program surveys and/or art therapist notes, programs meet or exceed their evaluation goals	Through observation and analysis, improve the efficacy of current art & healing programs.
The Art Center documents best practices in art and healing, so that success can be replicated.	3: There is a document that notes any lessons learned in the various programs, and recommendations for future implementation. This document is updated and reviewed by Community Program staff and is shared with art therapists and teaching artist.	Based on Strategy 1 and Strategy 2, systematically document learnings from each program using analysis and evaluation to inform future programming.

FA3: Enhancing the Art Center's art and healing practice to **nurture healthy communities.** **Objective 2:** **Educate** our broader audience on the **health benefits of art**

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Art Center board members understand and communicate the health benefits of art.	1: Board members can articulate the health benefits of seeing and making art.	Educate board about the health benefits of VACNJ programs (as part of mission moments during board meetings and strategic oversight committee meetings).
Art Center staff, docents, volunteers, and teaching artists understand and communicate the health benefits of art.	2: Docents and teaching staff are trained on and will speak about the health benefits of art.	Understand board, staff, docent, and teaching artists' current attitude towards health benefits of art. Educate docent and teaching staff to share out the health benefits with VACNJ learners. (exhibition training materials, docent handbook, C.E. programs, and messaging from admin)

FA3: Enhancing the Art Center's art and healing practice to **nurture healthy communities**. **Objective 3:** Take a **leadership role** in providing and promoting **art therapy** in the state of New Jersey

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
The Art Center is able to run all of its programs around the state and fill in for expected and unexpected absences of art therapists.	The Art Center has an established network of 6 art therapists.	Recruit art therapists new to the field seeking supervisory hours
	An art therapist works at the Art Center 35+ hours a week to cover art therapy programs located at and near the Art Center.	Hire an art therapist to be on staff 35+ hours a week at the Art Center
The Art Center is well-known and respected for its art and healing program statewide and nationally.	The Art Center staff follow research in the field and are members of industry leading art organizations in art and healing.	Serve on a local/national level in art programs/projects regarding the benefits of art & art therapy on local/national level
		Staff is well-informed and help educate the Art Center's donors, foundations, and government officials/agencies on the health benefits of art & art therapy

BG: Grow the **capacity** for the Art Center to fully realize, embrace and communicate its role as an arts anchor institution **Objective 1: Assess the need for physical space** to support the strategy of being an arts anchor

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
Board members are in alignment about how a future space would be used and where the Art Center would like to expand geographically.	1: Board members can explain how a future space benefits the Art Center's mission and where the Art Center should consider expanding.	Develop road map (timeline, goal posts) to successful expansion
Art Center board and leadership understands the costs of expansion.	2: Board and leadership receive a professional estimate of costs associated with expanding the Art Center's space.	Work with a consultant to explore the Art Center's space needs and provide recommendations on the best use cases and geographical locations for expansion.
The organization has a plan to meet the construction and ongoing operational costs of the expansion.	3: The Art Center has a business plan for the space expansion including a projection of revenue and cost, accompanied by a capital campaign development plan.	Develop business plan for sustainability of proposed space
		Develop campaign plan for raising capital for the expansion

BG: Grow the **capacity** for the Art Center to fully realize, embrace and communicate its role as an arts anchor institution **Objective 2: Develop strategies to use the "The Art Center as Art Anchor" message to deepen existing funding and expand our sources of funding** by attracting donors with aligned priorities and/or in new geographic areas.

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
The Art Center has a base of support for Art Center sufficient to support a successful capital campaign .	1: Development has a list of new individual and institutional donors who are potentially interested in supporting an arts anchor institution and understands what their priorities are.	Create and implement development strategies to reach new prospects
	2: Increase in donor retention rate.	Create and implement donor engagement strategies to cultivate prospects in the pipeline
	3: Increase in year-over-year contributions by individual donors.	Create a targeted development plan aimed at increasing contributions from local businesses, foundations, community leaders, and arts patrons.
Development team has the capacity to take on a capital campaign	4: Development team has the skills and staff capacity to implement a large campaign.	Development team makes internal plan to ensure that leadership/development team is prepared for/has capacity to take on a capital campaign
		Hire a consultant to identify early steps needed to prepare VAC for a capital campaign in 5-7 years.

BG: Grow the **capacity** for the Art Center to fully realize, embrace and communicate its role as an arts anchor institution **Objective 3: Strengthen leadership of the Board of Trustees and staff** by diversifying experience and investing in professional development, enhancing expertise and cultural competency to support the Art Center's role as an art anchor.

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
The Art Center's board and staff has diversity in expertise, life experience, and geography reflecting the communities it serves.	1. Measures of diversity increase on the Art Center board and staff.	Identify the diversity (such as geographic areas, expertise, and life experience) appropriate for the board. Attract trustee applicants with diverse locations / backgrounds/ skill sets. Consider a seat for a regional officer, corporate representatives. Increase the diversity of the applicant pool for staff, especially teaching artists.
Staff is professionally prepared for the Art Center to assume an art anchor role.	2. Staff receive training that helps them be professionally prepared for the Art Center becoming an art anchor.	Invest in staff development programs that focus on leadership, community engagement, cultural competency, and other (such as community development or government/nonprofit partnerships) to support the Art Center's growing role as an art anchor institution.
Staff and board are leaders in the fields associated with their work at the Art Center, presenting at statewide and national conferences and in publications.	3. The Art Center has documented best practices and effective processes and presents to peers in the field at conferences and/or in publications.	Art Center staff and/or board are sharing out the work of VACNJ and best practices through publications or conferences

BG: Grow the **capacity** for the Art Center to fully realize, embrace and communicate its role as an arts anchor institution **Objective 4: Cultivate partnerships** within the New Jersey art ecosystem

Outcome	Success Indicator	Strategy
The Art Center is recognized as a leader in NJ's Art ecosystem .	1. Increased awareness among art community of the Art Center and its programmatic expertise.	Identify what makes a strong collaborative art project that serves Art Center's goals and expands reputation as an Art Anchor. Approach local arts organizations, state and city agencies, and other community organizations for collaborative community-wide art projects that serve Art Center's goals, while expanding reputation as an Art Anchor. Convene arts partners to share information, experience, and best practices. Develop and implement an annual marketing strategy where we work with partners to spread the message of Art Center's mission-driven activities as an arts anchor
The Art Center is represented at regional art events such as conferences, professional networking events, committee or general meetings.	2. Staff and/or board represent the Art Center at regional art events, conferences, professional networking events, committees, and meetings.	Attend and participate in regional art events to strengthen connections and visibility.
Staff and board members represent the Art Center by serving on state or national committees in arts and nonprofit industry organizations.	3. Staff and/or board represent the Art Center on state or national arts committees (such as ArtPride, NJSCA, etc.)	Identify state and nationwide-level opportunities for committee service and share out with staff and board so that they are aware and able to nominate themselves.



VISUAL
ARTS
CENTER
OF NEW JERSEY

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www.artcenternj.org

