



Action Plan

To achieve its ambitious goals Arts Plan NJ will require broad participation from all sectors in a range of initiatives. This section articulates the most prominent strategic priorities to set New Jerseyans on the path of accomplishing the full range of Arts Plan NJ goals.

Sustain all gains made under the previous plan, and continue their development, focusing especially on: building the Discover Jersey Arts marketing campaign to augment participation; increasing community cultural planning and the development of the arts at the local level for effective community and economic planning and development; developing the folk arts infrastructure and other means of celebrating and embracing our cultural diversity; and developing and carrying out strategies to broaden, deepen and diversify cultural participation.

Establish and convene “Arts Plan NJ Advisory Panels” and “Leadership Teams” of arts and non-arts, public and private sector leaders at the very highest levels under the banner of the Arts Plan NJ partners in order to engage New Jersey’s most influential people in the implementation of this plan. Focus the work on developing ways for the arts to be integrated into public policy priorities and resources for the arts at all jurisdictional levels. Primary goals for such panels and teams would include stimulating greater private sector support to develop the sustainability and strength of New Jersey cultural institutions and expanding the advocacy for the implementation and support of Arts Plan NJ’s goals. These can be focused on specific issues and projects, an overarching issue or simply Arts Plan NJ’s implementation in general. Use this work to cultivate new board and staff leadership and more fundamental and pervasive connectivity between the arts and the entire spectrum of the civic agenda. In addition, it is strongly recommended that we keep in place the various thematic discussion groups that were so instrumental to the formation of this Plan and can now turn to its implementation and assessment.

Grow and strengthen arts advocacy to raise the level of public and private investment in the arts by joining, partnering with and supporting ArtPride NJ Foundation. Join with advocates within the state from the arts, history and humanities fields as well as other related industries, and connect New Jersey’s cultural institutions to national networks of service and advocacy. Build the capacity of arts leaders, arts professionals, artists, students, arts organizations (especially board members) and all persons and fields that would be advocates to make a compelling case for the public value of the arts. This can be accomplished through professional development, education, leadership training, knowledge sharing, cooperative ventures and effective communications.

Develop cultural tourism initiatives. The 37.6 billion dollar tourism industry is important to New Jersey’s economic health, and the arts, history and culture are key to the support of the tourism industry. Develop and invest resources in fostering the ability of the arts to do business in the travel and tourism industry; in developing maps, signs, materials and guides to connect people to available cultural resources and tapping into tourism networks and outlets to publicize and market the availability of the arts experience. Seek collaborations both among the arts and history communities, the NJ Division of Travel and Tourism, the Department of Transportation and regional and interstate authorities as well as with other involved industries (e.g., hotels, restaurants, chambers of commerce, other tourism venues, etc.) seeking to add value to arts tourism packages and attract the broadest possible audience. A key strategy will be to focus attention on air, rail and motor vehicle transportation systems for both marketing and product placement.

Develop programs and partnerships with the healthcare field and other natural allies. The relationship of the arts in fostering quality health care and the physical, mental and emotional well-being of people emerged repeatedly throughout the planning process as one of the most important areas for exploration, and one with enormous potential economic impact as well. This may be especially true in geriatric medicine that dovetails with the goal of promoting lifelong learning. Envision and develop strategies to build a large cadre of certified artists and arts providers who work side by side with medical practitioners in quality healthcare delivery. Collaborate with healthcare providers to incorporate an arts component into their strategic plans. The Arts Plan NJ’s planning process revealed at least two other fields for which partnerships and alliances with the arts seem natural and would produce mutual benefits. The first is the extensive network of libraries, which are increasingly viewed as cultural resources by virtue of their growing role in reaching their respective community with arts programming, cultural information and connection to resources for technical assistance and professional development. The second is real estate, an industry whose success relies so heavily on quality of life issues and communicating the important attributes of community. Make the arts, history and cultural opportunities a selling point and utilize the real estate network for information distribution and marketing. Pursue new and stronger relationships with faith-based organizations.

Create new resources for arts education and arts education advocacy to ensure that each of New Jersey’s more than 600 local school districts has the knowledge, capacity and funding to deliver quality arts education to its students. These new resources include an arts education advocacy group or network that can carry out the strategy to “identify and promote best practices and model schools in New Jersey districts, consolidate and disseminate research on the impact of arts education on student achievement, link arts education and community resources, and provide the infrastructure for effective

tive promotion of strong support of arts education in New Jersey,” articulated in Goal 2. This strategic priority includes the ongoing support of the NJ Arts Education Census Project, a survey designed to evaluate the condition of arts education in every K-12 public school throughout New Jersey, which has become a model for replication in other states. The NJ Arts Education Census Project, a program of the newly formed NJ Arts Education Partnership (NJAEP), released its first report in September 2007 providing a searchable database of the status of arts education in the state, as well as a web-based center for arts education information that can guide and support resource allocation, curriculum development, advocacy, training and networking. NJAEP, along with public and private partners can also be the nexus for coordinating the proliferation of after-school arts education programs, arts programs that actively engage people of all ages and the discussion with higher education needed to improve teacher and artist training.

Establish a statewide artist service organization or coordinated network of organizations to provide a wide range of assistance and programs to support New Jersey’s artists. An immediate objective of this organization or network would be to develop a comprehensive artist database with reliable and accessible information about New Jersey artists and their work in order to connect New Jersey artists to other available resources. This organization or network would be in the forefront of creating the infrastructure necessary to support artists in earning their livelihood from their art. Highest priority issues would include insurance, healthcare, live, work and market space, access to technology, technical assistance, marketing and professional development. This proposed organization or network will work with artists across disciplines, identifying and addressing their common needs.

Expand the network of technical assistance and organizational development service providers. Organizations and programs that provide expertise and assistance in areas key to the sound growth and development of cultural organizations have a major role to play in expanding their impact and public benefit and improving their sustainability. Areas of highest priority need have been identified as legal services, financial and accounting services, better connection to the resources of private business and industry, financial, operational and capital planning, technology development as well as application and board and volunteer training among others.

Develop new and larger financial resources for the arts that build capacity, sustainability and public value. Encourage community cultural planning to help local leaders understand the importance of investing in the arts. Explore creative ways to fund larger scale capital projects, especially those that improve accessibility, and explore other existing public funding programs to which the arts can apply. Work with state agencies to align policies and encourage investment in the arts. Aggressively pursue private sector funding and innovative funding vehicles intended to keep more corporate support in-state and grow more foundations and trusts dedicated to the arts. Encourage enhanced support from all sectors to grow the resources of the New Jersey Cultural Trust in order to realize the intention of its enabling legislation to aggregate long-term resources. Investment in the Cultural Trust has already resulted in 119 grants to organizations ensuring their long-term stability. Arts organizations and donors have responded enthusiastically to the incentives offered by the Trust, yet much more can be accomplished with greater resources. The ability of the Trust to strengthen those incentives and provide grants for a wide range of organizational strategies, including endowment building, institutional capacity building and capital development, is critical for realizing the full range of economic benefits laid out by this Plan. Make the case between the arts and wellness and quality healthcare to open up new funding possibilities. Apply the same principle to other fields. This priority can be a primary goal for both the Arts Plan NJ Advisory Panels and the ramped up advocacy cited later in this section.

Conduct a statewide technology audit and create an accessible, virtual “help desk” through partnerships among the nonprofit, private, and /or higher education sectors to enhance the development and application of technology in the arts. The capacity of New Jersey arts organizations and artists to access and employ technology varies widely throughout the state. A technology audit will provide information on how resources are distributed and used, and would allow us to develop and invest resources that enable artists and arts organizations to utilize technology for the creation, administration and transmission of art, thereby expanding the number of participants and enhancing the artistic experience. The primary function of the “help desk” would be to respond quickly to the ongoing needs of artists and arts organizations for technical assistance as they implement technology to enhance artistic, networking, communication and organizational practices.

Develop a set of standards and accords. The planning process revealed the importance and value of cultural institutions formally adopting and committing to the highest possible standards of conduct in the operation and development of their respective organizations and assessing their performance and progress. Integral to the concept is devotion to excellence, access, diversity, artists, the highest ethical standards, sound business practices, advocacy on behalf of the field, sharing of knowledge and leadership in implementing this Plan. This could be the focus of an “Arts Plan NJ Advisory Panel” as cited above. It can be a set of accords for formal adoption by art organizations and by our colleagues in the history community as well. It also has the potential to extend to a separate set of accords reflecting a corporate pledge to sustain the quality of life of the state and in so doing lead to increased shared resources.