



# Art Unites Us

Every day, Everywhere, Everyone  
in Northeast Indiana

Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.  
2022 – 2025 Strategic Framework  
Approved by the Arts United Board of Directors on 11/18/2021



## I. Overview

For more than 60 years, Arts United has led and supported the growth and vitality of Northeast Indiana’s quality of life – and our important work continues today. We’re passionate about the success of arts and culture, and we believe that music, dance, fine art, theatre, cinema, museums, historical sites, architecture, artful public spaces, and more are critical to the prosperity of our region.

### Vision

Arts and culture are present every day, everywhere, for everyone in Northeast Indiana.

### Mission

Arts United mobilizes resources to develop, coordinate, and support arts and culture, enhancing the quality of life and the economic vitality of Northeast Indiana.

### Values

- Excellence and innovation
- Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access (IDEA)
- Good stewardship of community assets
- Alignment with priorities for economic and community development

### Strategic Priorities, 2022 – 2025

1. Promote a culture of belonging by integrating IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and access) in everything we do.
2. Support a strong, integrated downtown Fort Wayne as the cultural and creative centerpiece of Northeast Indiana.
3. Lead the development of and advocacy for a stronger, more inclusive, and highly collaborative network of arts and culture nonprofits and artists in Northeast Indiana.

## II. Strategic Initiatives

As the Local Arts Agency serving Northeast Indiana, Arts United plays an important leadership role as a convener, facilitator, and partner in the following programs and roles.



Arts United is moving forward as a Local Arts Agency to support the growth and development of arts and culture in Fort Wayne and Northeast Indiana.

**Roles:**

- Advocacy and Promotion
- Cultural Planning and Development
- Community Events
- Grant Administration
- Resource Development

Arts United coordinates the Regional Arts Council, a Member Services Program, by facilitating administrative collaborations on behalf of 50+ member organizations.

**Roles:**

- Regional Arts Council
- Business Services Council
- Audience Development Council
- Arts & Culture Facilities Managers Council




Arts United activates and develops Arts Campus Fort Wayne, an Indiana State Cultural District designated by the Fort Wayne Common Council and the Indiana Arts Commission.

**Roles:**

- Cultural District Development
- Cultural Facility Management
- Performance Venue Operation



### III. Strategic Priorities

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	STRATEGIC INITIATIVES	DESIRED RESULTS	METRICS
<p>These strategic priorities guide all of Arts United’s decisions and actions as we implement our mission and initiatives.</p>	<p>Arts United activates our strategic priorities by implementing three interdependent initiatives.</p>	<p>By aligning our strategic priorities and initiatives, Arts United will achieve these results by 2025.</p>	<p>Arts United will know this plan has been successful when the following metrics are met by 2025.</p>
<p>1. Promote a culture of belonging by integrating IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity and access) into <u>everything</u> we do.</p>	    	<p>Arts United will demonstrate a continuing and full commitment to IDEA at all levels of governance, staffing, planning, programming, and grant-making.</p>	<p>Arts United’s board and staff implement an IDEA Action Plan and continually achieve and reevaluate benchmarks.</p>
<p>2. Support a strong, integrated downtown Fort Wayne as the cultural and creative centerpiece of Northeast Indiana.</p>		<p>Arts United will complete the renovation of the Kahn-designed Arts United Center, Auer Center and PPG ArtsLab, and Hall Center and ensure the operational sustainability, activation, and continued development of Arts Campus Fort Wayne.</p>	<p>\$35 million is invested in the Arts United Center, Auer Center, PPG ArtsLab, and Hall Center.  Attendance for cultural district resident organizations recovers and exceeds pre-pandemic levels.</p>
<p>3. Lead the development of and advocacy for a stronger, more inclusive, and highly collaborative network of arts and culture nonprofits and artists in Northeast Indiana.</p>		<p>Arts United will complete its transition from a United Arts Fund to a Local Arts Agency by fully implementing the strategic reorganization of its community development, member services, and cultural district programs. As a result, Arts United will establish a highly effective and financially sustainable platform for cultural collaboration, advocacy, and growth in Northeast Indiana.</p>	<p>70+ organizations and projects are supported per year.  Member organizations save \$1.6 million per year in administrative overhead through member services and below-market rent.  Attendance for regional arts council members recovers and exceeds pre-pandemic levels.</p>



## IV. Strategic Goals



### 1. Community Development

#### 1.1: Arts Advocacy and Promotion

Build relationships with local and state elected leaders to advocate for resources for facility renovation, pandemic recovery, and cultural development.

#### 1.2: Cultural Planning and Development

Facilitate planning and research processes to 1) positively engage artists and cultural nonprofit administrators, 2) inform advocacy, fundraising, and planning efforts, 3) educate and engage community decision-makers and elected leaders, and 4) support the community and economic development of Northeast Indiana.

#### 1.3: Community Events

Coordinate community events to celebrate and promote artists and cultural organizations in Northeast Indiana.

#### 1.4: Grant Administration

Thoughtfully steward and administer outcome-driven grant programs and partnerships in alignment with Arts United's vision, mission, and strategic priorities.

#### 1.5: Resource Development

Activate a Resource Development Plan to secure private and public funding for the 'A Soaring Vision' capital campaign, Annual Fund Drive, Arts Campus facility operation and cultural district programming, Member Services Program, and Community Development initiatives.

#### 1.6: Communication

Implement consistent, multi-channel communication strategies that support Arts United's mission and core programs and demonstrate the impact of arts and culture in Northeast Indiana.



### 2. Member Services Program

#### 2.1: Program Implementation

Complete the Implementation Phase of the newly reorganized program with a "Soft Launch" beginning in January 2022 and a "Hard Launch" beginning in July 2022, and partner with member organizations to continually improve services in years 2023 – 2025.

#### 2.2: Professional and Organizational Development

Expand professional and organizational development opportunities for member organizations.

#### 2.3: Audience Development

Work with a consultant to develop individualized audience development strategies for participating members, evaluate and select collaborative strategies that will bring the greatest benefit to participating members, and update the business model for the ArtsTix Community Box Office and Audience Development Council.

#### 2.4: Legislative Agenda

Establish a subcommittee of the Regional Arts Council to develop an Arts Advocacy Agenda that supports policies and programs at the local, state, and national levels that benefit member organizations.

#### 2.5: Board Chair and CEO Engagement

Engage the Board Chairs and CEOs of member organizations in dialogue and action planning to address issues affecting arts and culture nonprofits.



### 3. Cultural District

#### 3.1: Cultural District

Convene Arts Campus Fort Wayne through place-making, partnerships, and communication strategies so that it becomes recognized as Northeast Indiana's premier cultural district and a major community asset.

#### 3.2: Facilities Management

Renovate and manage the Arts United Center, Auer Center, and Hall Center in a way that anchors the Arts Campus and supports its development as a premier cultural district and major community asset.

#### 3.3: Performance Venue Operation

Operate the Arts United Center and Parkview Physicians Group ArtsLab to support and promote local talent and creativity within the cultural district.

## 4. Organizational Excellence

#### 4.1: IDEA Action Plan

Building on United Front training, work with a facilitator to develop and implement an IDEA Action Plan for Arts United.

#### 4.2: Influential and Representative Board

Build and support a representative and influential board of directors that contributes its diverse skills and perspectives to driving Arts United's vision, mission, priorities, and initiatives forward.

#### 4.3: Effective and Diverse Staff

Build and support a high-performing, multidimensional team of professionals that is focused on achieving Arts United's priorities and continually improving Arts United's core programs.

#### 4.4: Strong Institutional Practices

Implement policies, practices and procedures that support a best-in-class nonprofit organization.