



**Fiscal Year 2015 - 2017  
Strategic Plan**

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## **Executive Summary**

### **The Wisconsin Arts Board's Goals:**

- Assist Wisconsin communities to engage the creative industries in sustainable community and economic development.
- Champion lifelong learning that inspires imagination, creativity, and innovation.
- Encourage all in Wisconsin to live vibrant expressive lives by affording them opportunities to connect to the rich heritage of Wisconsin and to explore their individual creativity.
- Insist upon sufficient resources and smart public policy to ensure that these goals, valued by the public, are achieved.

### **Focus:**

The Arts Board's FY2015-2017 strategic plan guides our work from July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017. During this three year period we focus staff, board members, technical assistance and grant dollar resources primarily on the creation and presentation of art and cultural activity, arts education, and community and economic development. We strategically allocate our resources to move us toward attaining all of our goals. Our planning philosophy determines that we keep our goals strong, born of our mission and vision and aligned with our positioning statement, which is Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce. Our goals must also be grounded in current reality and resources, and so we do not include low priority items in our plan.

In addition to our ongoing work in areas such as community development, creativity and arts in education, serving under-served communities, and the folk and traditional arts, several initiatives throughout this plan serve as "rallying points" for our resources:

- the work of the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education
- our active leadership in the National Creativity Network
- our counsel and technical assistance to the nonprofit arm of Wisconsin's creative sector
- collaboration with our grantee partners to communicate the public value of the work that we all provide to our communities.

### **Direction:**

Our previously noted focus guides us in the direction of our vision, which is that the arts are basic to human life and essential to the human spirit.

\* July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017

**Wisconsin Arts Board**  
*Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce.*

**Mission Statement**

The Wisconsin Arts Board is the state agency which nurtures creativity, cultivates expression, promotes the arts, supports the arts in education, stimulates community and economic development and serves as a resource for people of every culture and heritage.

**Positioning Statement**

Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce

**Vision**

The Wisconsin Arts Board vision is inspired by a quote from the late Robert E. Gard, Professor Emeritus of Community Theatre, University of Wisconsin:

"If we are seeking in America, let it be for the reality of democracy in the arts. Let art begin at home and let it spread through the children and the parents, and through the schools and the institutions, and through government. And let us start by acceptance, not negation - acceptance that the arts are important everywhere, and that they can exist and flourish in small places as well as large, with money or without it, according to the will of the people. Let us put firmly and permanently aside the cliché that the arts are a frill. Let us accept the goodness of art where we are now, and expand its worth in the places where people live."

We embrace this vision: it guides our belief that the arts are basic to human life and essential to the human spirit.

**Core Values**

The Wisconsin Arts Board values:

- imagination
- creativity
- curiosity
- freedom of expression
- respect and appreciation for all cultures and people
- artistic quality
- a broad definition of the arts
- audience and patron development
- community engagement

The Wisconsin Arts Board's programs and activities do not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission, access or employment.



## Fiscal Year 2015 - 2017 Strategic Plan

### Goals and Strategies

#### Preamble – Goal #1

*The cultural assets in a community form the magnetic force that attracts creative workers and the sustenance that allows them to thrive. Without a strong arts presence, a community can neither breed creative talent nor attract it. That talent is essential to competitive commerce in urban and rural areas alike. By engaging public, private, and nonprofit sectors in Wisconsin's creative, knowledge-based economy, we will stimulate growth, strengthen the impact of artists and arts organizations on regional economies, and expand community innovation and entrepreneurship.*

#### Goal # 1

Assist Wisconsin communities to engage the creative industries in sustainable community and economic development.

#### Strategies

- a. Recognize and support creative industries\*, defined as those organizations, individuals and companies whose products and services have their origin in artistic, cultural, creative, and/or aesthetic content, as a critical sector in community and regional economic development.
- b. Ensure that the vital role that creative and social capital plays within healthy communities is understood by local and state leadership.
- c. Foster innovative collaboration between sectors (public, nonprofit, private) to attract and leverage increased investment in the arts throughout the state. This includes small business development support for the arts.
- d. Make clear the important links between creativity and the solutions needed for building sustainable businesses and communities.

\* The Wisconsin Arts Board thanks the Creative Alliance of Greater Milwaukee for the definition of creative industries above - industries such as advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, culinary arts, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, video and photography, software, computer games and electronic publishing, music and the visual and performing arts, publishing, television and radio.

### **Preamble – Goal #2**

*Children whose minds are stimulated by an arts-infused education develop discipline, focus, judgment, teamwork, problem-solving skills, attention to detail, and a grasp of the "big picture" more quickly than those who don't... and stay ahead of the curve throughout their school career. With creativity education as core curriculum in our preK-12 schools, we will nurture bold thinkers who work innovatively and take entrepreneurial risks in a fast-changing world – where the model for the school as knowledge factory is as outdated as traditional production models for manufacturing. By encouraging creativity education along the lifespan, we foster creative citizens of all ages.*

### **Goal #2**

Champion lifelong learning that inspires imagination, creativity, and innovation.

#### Strategies

- a. Sustain our leadership in the work of the Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education, and the National Creativity Network.
- b. Advocate for inclusion of a diversity of cultures in arts education curricula.
- c. Showcase schools that integrate the arts into their curriculum, and support partnerships between cultural and community organizations that offer out-of-school arts opportunities, particularly those for at-risk youth.
- d. Partner with artists and arts organizations to provide multi-generational opportunities for arts learning through grants and services.
- e. Assist and support artists and arts educators, working in pre-K through 16, and adult, education, through grants and services.
- f. Provide information and resources to arts education advocates and decision makers.

### Preamble – Goal #3

*We will enhance the strong relationship between engagement in the arts and quality of life by encouraging artistic choices for the people of Wisconsin— in the artistry they experience from others and in their own creative expressions. As Bill Ivey, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, observed: "... the benefits of an expressive life [are] a reservoir of identity and spiritual renewal powerful enough to replace the fading allure of empty consumerism." (preface to Arts Inc.)*

### Goal # 3

Encourage all in Wisconsin to live vibrant expressive lives by affording them opportunities to connect to the rich heritage of Wisconsin and to explore their individual creativity.

#### Strategies

- a. Provide grants and services that support creative work and cultivate expression.
- b. Help develop and coordinate networks that leverage talent and resources toward enriching Wisconsin's arts and cultural life.
- c. Maximize broad demographic participation in the Wisconsin Arts Board's programs.
- d. Explore new ways to support and recognize Wisconsin's artists and elevate their work to a national and international stage.
  - i. Explore the possibility of creating a Wisconsin Artist Award to recognize both outstanding emerging artists, and established artists who have made significant contributions to their field.
- e. Encourage artists from beyond Wisconsin's borders to bring their innovative work into our state, enhancing the work of Wisconsin's artists and igniting new work via Wisconsin's nationally recognized network of performing arts presenters and our visual and performing arts communities.
- f. Function as Wisconsin's center for information on arts and culture, and as an initiator of research on arts and culture.
- g. Advocate and provide technical assistance for cultural inclusion within Wisconsin's arts community.

#### **Preamble – Goal #4**

*The resources and policy must exist to support the goals stated in this plan, so that we will accomplish the extraordinary work that could be achieved through its implementation. Wisconsin must be as strategically positioned to thrive in the future as it deserves to be, so that the quality of the economic, educational and expressive life of its citizens will be of the highest degree.*

#### **Goal # 4**

Insist upon sufficient resources and smart public policy to ensure that these goals, valued by the public, are achieved.

##### Strategies

- a. Advocate effectively to public leaders and their communities about the importance of the arts using the New Economy Funding Initiative.
- b. Create formal partnerships with regional economic development agencies to provide forums that address funding, redundancy in arts organizations and services, and building or maintaining essential infrastructure.
- c. Clarify and enhance the current roles and responsibilities of Arts Board members.
- d. Explore the formation of a creative industries working group for the Arts Board, composed of Arts Board members and industry leaders.

## Glossary of Terms

**Creative Economy** - Artists, cultural nonprofits, and creative businesses working together to produce and distribute cultural goods and services that have a positive impact on the economy by generating jobs, revenue, and heightening quality of life.

*(New England Foundation for the Arts)*

**Creative Industries** - Industries such as advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, culinary arts, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, video and photography, software, computer games and electronic publishing, music and the visual and performing arts, publishing, television and radio.

*(Creative Alliance of Greater Milwaukee)*

**Expressive Life** - Expressive life is made up of two components: heritage and voice. Heritage constitutes one half of expressive life: the part that is about belonging, continuity, community and history; it is expressed through art and ideas grounded in family, neighborhood, ethnicity, nationality and the many linkages that provide securing knowledge that we come from a specific place and are not alone. Voice, the other half of our expressive life, is quite different: a realm of individual expression where we can be autonomous, personally accomplished and cosmopolitan – a space in which we can, at times, even challenge the conventions of community or family heritage.

*(Bill Ivey, former chair of the National Endowment of the Arts and Director of the Curb Center for Arts, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University, from his book Arts, Inc.: How Greed and Neglect Have Destroyed Our Cultural Rights.)*

**Public Value** - The value that a particular product or activity holds for the public; the equivalent of shareholder value in public management.

The public value {that an organization} seeks to produce, though it may involve economic returns or useful products and services, is different in kind from the value created in and by the private sector. The {organization} creates value by fulfilling its... mission— roughly stated, to make a positive difference in the individual and collective lives of citizens of the {community} through the arts. The degree to which that mission is fulfilled should be measured both quantitatively (how many citizens receive services from the organization?) and qualitatively (what kinds of impact do those services have on the community's members?). Creating the highest level value, then, means the key task will be to reach as many {community members} as possible in as many places as possible and to affect them as positively and profoundly as possible.

*(Mark Moore, Hauser Professor of Nonprofit Organizations and faculty director of the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, from his book Creating Public Value Through State Arts Agencies)*

**Social Capital** - The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. The reduction of all the forms of in-person social intercourse upon which Americans used to found, educate, and enrich the fabric of their social lives undermines the active civil engagement which a strong democracy requires from its citizens.

*(Robert Putman Malkin Professor of Public Policy at the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, from his book Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.)*



**Wisconsin Arts Board**

Bruce Bernberg, Chair, Racine  
Bob Wagner, Vice Chair, Mequon  
Kevin Miller, Secretary, Fond du Lac

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Mary Gielow, Mequon  
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LaMoine MacLaughlin, Amery  
Ron Madich, La Pointe  
Heather McDonell  
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