

Strategic Plan Report 2022-27



APPROACH

2022-27 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



In 2021, our small but mighty team safely came together - virtually and, when the weather allowed, "en plein air" - to envision and set an ambitious course for the next 5 years. We interviewed over 100 artists and arts organization representatives; conducted extensive analyses of our organization and the environment in which we operate, and engaged our Artist Advisory Committee members, Board members, staff, and volunteers in a series of individual and group planning exercises.

Led by then First Vice Board Co-Chair Sarah Moran, and supported by Second Vice Board Co-Chair Sarah Crawford, our 2022-27 strategic planning process was a monumental labour of love involving 300+ volunteer hours, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who played a part. For more details on the planning process, please see page 9.



*Members of
County Arts Staff,
Board, and Artist
Advisory
Committee at a
Fall 2021
Strategic Plan
Visioning Session*

County Arts is thrilled to share our 2022-27 Strategic Plan Report with the community. We invite you to explore our new Mission, Vision, and Values statements, our three Strategic Priorities and related Goals, and learn more about how we are ensuring this community-informed roadmap results in relevant programs and services responding to the changing needs of Prince Edward County artists, arts organizations, and the broader community.

CONTEXT

2022-27 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



Since 1986, the Prince Edward County Arts Council (County Arts) has been bringing artists together and connecting them with the community. Today, we are an anchor organization committed to ensuring that artists can thrive here and continue to fuel the creative spirit that defines Prince Edward County.

Guided by our previous (2017-2021) strategic plan, the hiring of our first Executive Director set County Arts on an exciting trajectory for growth, catalyzing a significant expansion of services and supports for the local arts community through the launch of the Artist Fund, a fresh, artist-centered website, a strengthened fundraising strategy, and more.



Executive Director Janna Smith and Special Initiatives Manager Andrea Dawes at Thrive PEC Symposium



PECI Students taking in the 2022 Art in the County exhibition

Of course, the end of that 5 year period coincided with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and a devastating series of challenges for local artists and arts organizations, including County Arts. Amidst all of the upheaval, however, came new opportunities - for County Arts to develop innovative adaptations and creative solutions to support the arts community during the recovery period, and - through our strategic planning process - to reinvent and imagine a bold new vision for our role in the County's creative ecosystem.

WHAT WE STAND FOR



We emerged from our 2022-27 strategic planning effort invigorated by and equipped with three key tools to communicate our activities, aspirations, and ethos to the world.

Our refreshed Mission Statement conveys our purpose (Why do we exist?). Our first ever Vision statement communicates our ambitious future aspirations for the arts in Prince Edward County (Where are we going?). And our first set of core Values guides every aspect of our work - from program design to how we engage with and advocate alongside the community, and everything in between.

Mission

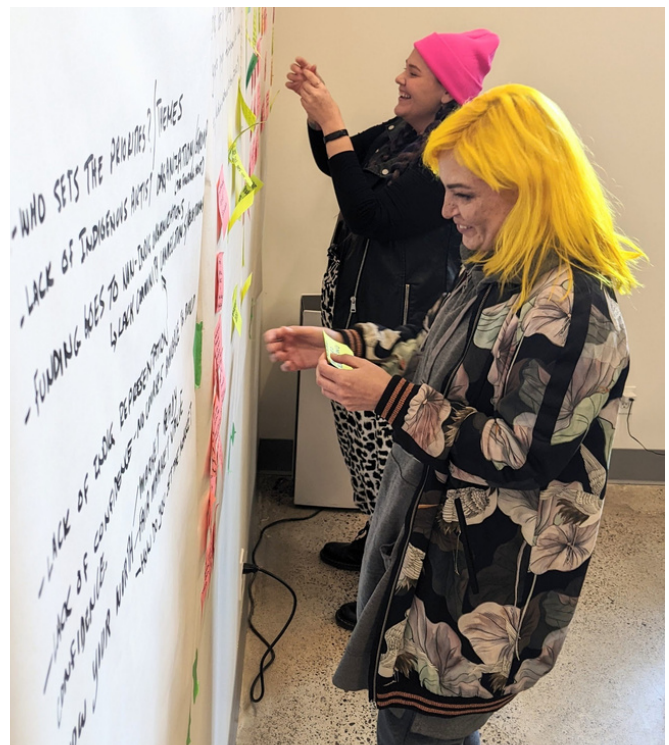
To enrich the community by actively supporting and promoting the arts and artists as an essential part of life in Prince Edward County.

Vision

Prince Edward County is recognized as one of Canada's top arts destinations, where the arts thrive and all artists can reach their full potential, contributing to quality of life and sense of belonging.

Values

- Inclusion - Welcoming all artists in the community
- Community - Coming together as artists, arts-lovers and active participants
- Empowerment - of all artists to develop their artistic practice
- Exploration - Incubating of new ideas, programming, creativity
- Action - Engaging in issues relevant to the arts and community



Artists participating in Design Thinking session to shape the Indigenous Voices Fund, April 2023

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1



Connect with and support a greater diversity of arts, artists and community

Goals:

- Grow programming that is responsive to all artists and the community
- Be a hub for connecting, for sharing knowledge and resources
- Eliminate barriers for underrepresented groups



Artists participating in a February 2023 Murals and Public Art 101 Workshop co-presented with Base 31

County Arts will work to fund, design, and deliver programming that reflects, includes, and responds to the needs of the full diversity of our artistic community, and that harnesses the power of art and the skills of local artists for the benefit of Prince Edward County residents. To this end, we will make ongoing efforts to listen to and engage with the community through our Artist Advisory Committee; regular Surveys of Artists/Members, County Arts Lab and event participants; and other community resources, including fellow nonprofits and the Vital Signs Database.

County Arts will work to remove barriers to participation and attendance for our existing opportunities, and create new initiatives such as the Indigenous Voices Fund and Art Together, to ensure that artists and community members of all ages and backgrounds can access and benefit from our programs, events, and services.

We will solidify County Arts' role as a key, multi-faceted resource for community arts programming, artist career development, arts events, and arts-related inquiries in Prince Edward County. We will bring together artists, arts lovers, and arts learners by creating opportunities for networking, professional development, and skills-building. We will collaborate with artists, residents, and community partners to use the arts to advance justice, truth and reconciliation, and enhance community belonging in Prince Edward County.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2



Strengthen our collective voice for the arts community

Goals:

- Lead advocacy about the impact and benefit of the arts
- Raise awareness, with government, of issues affecting the arts and artists
- Support the region in becoming a recognized arts destination



The Department of Illumination's Firelight Lantern Festival

County Arts will work to ensure that the the benefits of the arts, issues affecting the local arts community, and the importance of arts funding, are at top of mind for decision-makers at all levels of the government. We will explore new ways to engage with artists, arts organizations/businesses, and the wider community to listen to, understand, and elevate their voices and perspectives. We will create opportunities for artists and arts organizations to communicate, collaborate, and advocate around issues that matter to them.

We will work to solidify our role as a resource for the Municipality on all issues relating to the arts and affecting local artists. We will advocate and build local capacity for public art and creative placemaking in Prince Edward County. We will advocate for fair pay and working conditions for local artists, both through our own programming and increasing awareness in the wider community.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3



Build sustainability to deliver on our mission for the long term

Goals:

- Drive funding to build capacity
- Develop a strong and relevant brand
- Create operational structure to support stability and growth



Art in the County 2019

County Arts will implement a strong, diversified fund development strategy to secure the necessary human and financial resources to deliver our increasingly complex array of programs, events, and services. We will work to clarify and strengthen the County Arts brand, developing and implementing a cohesive, effective strategy for communicating about these offerings with a growing and diversifying number of audiences.

To ensure the retention of staff and volunteers and enable us to sustainably deliver on our mission and work towards our vision, County Arts will invest in and put into place the necessary supports and processes - including financial resources, volunteer management/stewardship system, clear organizational structure, good governance, and succession plans.

We will recognize, celebrate, and nurture relationships with existing supporters, work to enhance the value of County Arts memberships, and identify and pursue new revenue sources and partnerships to allow us to sustain and capitalize on our current growth trajectory.

IMPLEMENTATION



How are we putting the Plan into action?

Our primary tool to ensure the successful implementation of the 2022-27 Strategic Plan is an action-oriented Operational Plan. This internal document breaks down each of our Strategic Goals into Operational Objectives, and outlines the over 50 (!) tactics that the County Arts team of Staff, Board, and Volunteers will carry out in order to achieve them.

For each tactic, we have identified who is responsible/involved, a timeline, planned/upcoming short-term activities, and - importantly - the resources and conditions/gating factors that must be met to carry them out. The Operational Plan is a living, guiding document for the County Arts team that will be revisited, and adapted to our changing environment as necessary.

*Shatterbox Theatre rehearsing
at the County Arts Lab*



Printmaking Session at Art Together



How will we measure progress?

To monitor our progress, we have assigned to each tactic an indicator of success, specific annual target (numerical when possible), and a space to track achievements to date. Staff and Board will regularly review the Operational Plan content to ensure alignment with our fund development, resource allocation, and programmatic decision-making processes.

MORE INFO

2022-27 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



Planning Phase 1: Information Gathering Where are we? Why are we there?

- County Arts Board members and staff conducted a Stakeholder Analysis (informed by 100+ interviews with artists and arts organization representatives - including County Arts members and non-members), External Environmental Analysis, and Internal/Organizational Analysis to understand.
- Staff, Board, and Artist Advisory Committee Members participated in a 2-phase (individual and then in-person) SWOT Analysis exercise to identify and discuss our strengths, weaknesses, threats/challenges, and opportunities.

Planning Phase 2: Visioning & Goal Setting Where do we want to be?

- We then worked with Volunteer Consultant Karen Bell to develop a Situational Analysis document summarizing all of the perspectives gathered in Phase 1.
- Staff, Board, and Artist Advisory Committee Members came together for a Visioning session led by Karen to review this document, further hone in on our strategic priorities and goals, and create our new Mission, Vision, and Values.
- Based on all of the above, the Strategic Plan was created, reviewed, and approved!



*County Arts Team
Members Ted Norris,
Mehdi Agahi, and
Sarah Crawford at
the Visioning session*

THANK YOU!



Giving Thanks

First and foremost, we would like to thank our fearless strategic planning leader, our then Co-Vice-Chair **Sarah Moran**, for her expertise and devoting countless hours and skills, and endless, infectious energy, to this process. A special thanks as well to Volunteer Consultant **Karen Bell** for contributing critical expertise and helping unlock and give meaning to our perspectives and ideas.

This process and the resulting plan are truly community-inspired thanks to the invaluable input of the **100+ artists and arts organization representatives** we interviewed, and our brilliant **Artist Advisory Committee members, Volunteer Signature Program/Event Committee Chairs, and Board and Staff Members** who participated in the organizational and SWOT analysis process and visioning sessions (pictured below - special thanks to **Sarah Crawford** for hosting us in this lovely space, allowing us to safely work and dream together despite pandemic-related challenges!). **Thank you!**



WHAT WE DO



County Arts, formally incorporated as the Prince Edward County Arts Council in 1986, was initially formed in 1979 when members of the community got together to form a group dedicated to promoting the arts in Prince Edward County. Our team has been hard at work activating and championing our vibrant arts sector ever since!

We carry out our mission to enrich the community by actively supporting and promoting the arts and artists as an essential part of life in Prince Edward County by:

- Connecting artists to audiences through our signature events and programs, including Art in the County, PEC Arts Trail, PEC Studio Tour, and The Maker's Hand
- Increasing access to the social and health benefits of art-making through our community-focused programming – County Arts Lab, Art for Well-Being, Artists in the Community grant, and more
- Supporting artists' career development through our Artist Fund grants, Indigenous Voices Fund, Student Arts Award program, Artist Residency program, Activate Arts rental program, and by providing teaching and professional development opportunities at the County Arts Lab
- Promoting the arts and artists through Artscene newsletter, Artscene on 99.3 County FM, What's On event listing, and Member Profiles on countyarts.ca
- Incubating new arts events and initiatives, from the PEC Jazz Festival to County Kids Read and more, as they work towards independent charitable status
- Advocating for the arts and their benefits for our community, and working collaboratively with those who share a common interest in leveraging the arts for the economic and social development of Prince Edward County



Acrylic Pouring Workshop at the County Arts Lab



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