



LINCOLN ARTS

2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



INTRODUCTION

About Lincoln Arts

Championing the arts, connecting people, changing lives—that's what we do.

Lincoln Arts is here to serve the arts community of Nebraska's capital and to help the arts serve the greater community. Because one of the greatest means of bringing people together and making true impact on our community is the language of art. Diverse and universal, the arts serve as a connector—but only for those lucky enough to have access to it.

The arts are a human right that Lincoln Arts believes everyone in the community should have the privilege of accessing.

We strive to foster positive, inclusive arts opportunities and experiences for all through our programming, artist and community partnerships, local events, and arts advocacy efforts. And it starts with us.

Older adults, new Americans, people with developmental disabilities, those impacted by the justice system—anyone can find connection, resilience, and inclusion through the arts. They need only the opportunity to experience them. That's where we come in, and that's why under-resourced groups are the primary target for our community partnership programming.

Just as we seek to give those in the community who don't have access to the arts the opportunities to create, we strive to give local artists who don't have access to the greater Lincoln community the opportunities to connect through our artist-focused programming, as well as our vendor and demonstration events.



About This Strategic Plan

This strategic plan was created with robust input from Lincoln Arts stakeholders including artists, patrons, partners, staff, and board members. Our process for creating this strategic plan included two facilitated focus groups, one stakeholder survey, and one workshop session guided by external facilitators, WaltherSeck Associates. Our plan builds on the recent growth of Lincoln Arts, the recent partnership with Lincoln Calling, the planned establishment of a Downtown Arts & Culture District, current strengths of the organization and its challenges, and our desire to expand our reach and impact. Deep contemplation was given to how to improve access to the arts, support artists, and bolster Lincoln's art scene.

This plan was approved in November 2023.

Enhance arts access and connections to diverse communities through collaborative opportunities & partnerships.

About This Goal

Lincoln Arts is dedicated to enriching arts access and fostering connections with under-resourced communities through strategic collaborations and partnerships. Expansion of accessibility initiatives, specifically targeting populations that currently lack access to the arts that so many others of us enjoy, will bridge this gap. We will also provide a framework to support local arts organizations and artists in reaching out to these under-resourced populations. We will also broaden pathways to all forms of arts, including culinary arts, by providing opportunities and hosting events that engage and resonate with a wide range of audiences. Through these strategies, Lincoln Arts seeks to create an inclusive and vibrant arts community that reflects the diversity of the broader population.

Strategy 1.1

Create and expand accessibility strategies to reach populations that are underserved by the arts community (and the human service organizations that serve them) through Lincoln Arts' arts access programming.

Strategy 1.2

Build on identified accessibility strategies to assist local arts organizations and artists reach populations that are underserved by the arts community.

Strategy 1.3

Expand pathways to all of the arts through opportunities and events (including culinary arts).

GOAL 2

ARTS INDUSTRY

Serve as a platform to amplify artists through opportunities and resources that contribute to their success.

About This Goal

Lincoln Arts is driven by a commitment to serve as a dynamic platform that amplifies artists and fosters their success. One pivotal strategy is the creation of a comprehensive "one stop shop" website, consolidating arts-related information, events, opportunities, a directory, arts journalism and more. This centralized hub will streamline access for artists and enhance visibility for the broader community. We will also host and facilitate events geared towards professional development, networking, and showcasing opportunities for artists, building a vibrant ecosystem for artistic growth. Exploring avenues to fund or provide additional financial support underscores the organization's dedication to alleviating financial barriers for artists, enabling them to focus on their craft. Lastly, Lincoln Arts is leading the establishment of a downtown creative district, fostering a thriving environment that supports and celebrates the arts. Through these strategies, we aspire to play a pivotal role in the sustainable growth and success of the arts industry.

Strategy 2.1

Create a "one stop shop" website for the arts with events, opportunities, a directory, and a job board.

Strategy 2.2

Host and facilitate events that promote professional development, networking activities, and opportunities for and about artists.

Strategy 2.3

Explore ways to fund or provide additional financial support for artists.

Strategy 2.4

Share and expand arts review and arts journalism.

Strategy 2.5

Facilitate the establishment of the downtown creative district.

GOAL 3 ARTS ADVOCACY

Using data, bring arts to the forefront for community leaders and highlight its impact on jobs, economy, and quality of life.

About This Goal

Lincoln Arts recognizes the pivotal role of data-driven initiatives in positioning the arts at the forefront of community priorities. By creating a compelling case supported by data, Lincoln Arts aims to showcase the tangible impact of the arts on job creation, economic development, and overall quality of life. This strategy not only elevates the significance of the arts but also provides community leaders with concrete evidence to advocate for its inclusion in funding priorities, broader planning, and decision-making processes. We also seek to expand public relations efforts to communicate the countless benefits and intrinsic value that the arts bring to our community. Building public partnerships is key to enhancing public funding for the arts and fostering collaboration between the nonprofit and public sectors. Through these strategic approaches, we hope to establish a robust foundation for sustained support and recognition of the importance of arts within the community.

Strategy 3.1

Create a case to support the arts with data.

Strategy 3.2

Expand public relations efforts to share benefits and value of the arts.

Strategy 3.3

Build public partnerships to increase public funding.

GOAL 4

ARTS EVENTS

Ensure the future of arts events through sustainability plans and involving stakeholder communities in the planning process.

About This Goal

Lincoln Arts is securing the future of community arts events through sustainability planning and active engagement of stakeholders in the planning process. We aim to foster collaboration by partnering with other entities, leveraging collective efforts to enhance both impact and reach. We will also heighten awareness among artists and creatives regarding arts events such as the Lincoln Arts Festival and Lincoln Calling. The creation of a comprehensive operations plan for signature events will ensure their long-term sustainability and provide a structured framework for successful execution. The recent acquisition of the Lincoln Calling Music Festival prompts the need to expand and delineate our roles and processes, ensuring a seamless integration into Lincoln Arts' broader mission. Through these strategic initiatives, we will ensure the continuity of local arts events and strengthen the connection between the broader community and those involved in our community's artistic landscape.

Strategy 4.1

Collaborate on events with other organizations.

Strategy 4.2

Increase artists' awareness of Lincoln Arts activities, such as the Lincoln Arts Festival.

Strategy 4.3

Create an operations plan for signature Lincoln Arts events that ensures long-term sustainability of events.

Strategy 4.4

Clarify Lincoln Arts' role in other organizations' arts events.

Strategy 4.5

Expand and define Lincoln Arts' role and processes for Lincoln Calling.

GOAL 5 FUND DEVELOPMENT

Strengthen and stabilize diverse funding sources through a bold fundraising strategy for Lincoln Arts and the greater arts community.

About This Goal

A focus on funding is imperative for sustained growth and stability, both for Lincoln Arts and the broader arts community we serve. The development of a compelling case statement serves as a cornerstone for effective development efforts. Approaching potential funders based on populations served and interest areas enhances the targeting of resources. Collaboration with other organizations in fund development efforts will amplify impact and foster a supportive ecosystem for the arts. The expansion of the Ghost Light Society bolsters the organization's major gifts program, while strengthening relationships with philanthropic organizations and developing corporate support further diversifies funding streams. Through these initiatives, Lincoln Arts will solidify its financial foundation and contribute to the stability and flourishing of the broader arts community.

Strategy 5.1

Develop a fund development strategy aligned with Lincoln Arts' goals, projects, and initiatives.

Strategy 5.2

Develop a case statement in line with Lincoln Arts' brand, awareness, and communications strategy.

Strategy 5.3

Identify and approach potential funders by identifying populations and interest areas.

Strategy 5.4

Collaborate with additional organizations in fund development efforts.

Strategy 5.5

Expand and enhance Ghost Light Society membership program.

Strategy 5.6

Develop and strengthen relationships with philanthropic organization funders.

Strategy 5.7

Develop corporate support (sponsorship) incentives and ensure follow-through.

GOAL 6

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Build board and organizational capacity to maximize recent growth and future endeavors.

About This Goal

Defining organizational structure is pivotal for Lincoln Arts as it navigates recent growth and charts a course for the future. Ensuring that we possess the necessary board and staff capacity, and skills is fundamental to the successful implementation of our vision and this strategic plan. Creating opportunities for the board and staff to actively engage with patrons, donors, and the community fosters a dynamic and responsive organizational culture, while exploring staff development and compensation recognizes the importance of investing in the professional growth and well-being of the team. Moreover, expanding partnerships and engagement with for-profit organizations, both within and outside the arts community, opens avenues for collaboration, enriching Lincoln's arts ecosystem. These strategies will fortify our internal structures, positioning ourselves for sustained growth, and ensuring our ability to effectively contribute to the vibrant arts landscape we serve.

Strategy 6.1

Ensure Lincoln Arts has board and staff capacity and skills to execute the strategic plan.

Strategy 6.2

Provide opportunities for Lincoln Arts board and staff to engage with patrons, donors, and the community.

Strategy 6.3

Explore staff development and compensation.

Strategy 6.4

Expand partnership and engagement with for-profit organizations both within and outside the arts community (businesses, galleries, etc.).