



Arts MIDWEST

Strategic Plan | 2018–2020

Arts Midwest presents our 2018–2020 strategic plan, which will inspire and guide our vision and work as we generate creative experiences for the Midwest in a constantly-changing environment.

This plan was created by Arts Midwest’s Board of Directors and staff with extensive and broad input from stakeholders, arts leaders, and program participants. The process, conducted by Minneapolis-based Aurora Consulting, included one-on-one confidential phone interviews with 22 national arts leaders; a round table session in Minneapolis with artists and arts programmers from rural and urban areas representing all disciplines; and an extensive online survey of program participants. Arts Midwest’s Board and staff reviewed and discussed the results of that comprehensive input during a two-day intensive retreat in November 2016—leading to renewed vision, goals, and strategies for Arts Midwest.

The pathway outlined for Arts Midwest is reflective of the exciting, turbulent, and complex times in which we live. Across our region and around the world, we witness changes that affect our lives and those of the many cultural organizations and artists with whom we share a collective space.

Arts Midwest views creative experiences as instruments for bringing people together, affirming meaning, broadening world views, and enhancing lives. We will assertively engage more deeply with our many and varied communities, exploring opportunities and ensuring Arts Midwest genuinely understands the issues and trends that exist. With this understanding, and through our personal and programmatic efforts, we will work toward our vision of a healthy, vibrant region.

Arts Midwest looks ahead with optimism to our future and to fulfilling our mission and vision for our region and beyond.

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THE MISSION of Arts Midwest is to promote creativity, nurture cultural leadership, and engage people in meaningful arts experiences, bringing vitality to Midwest communities and enriching people’s lives.

WE HAVE A VISION of communities in which creative expression and civic engagement flourish and are transformational.



Generate creative experiences that encourage curiosity and stimulate a healthy, vibrant region.

- Embrace the needs of our broad geographic region through relevant and accessible programming.
- Strengthen our commitment to programs that celebrate diversity and inclusion, and advance equity in the arts.
- Deliver meaningful creative experiences by capitalizing on our assets through sharing program knowledge, resources, and connections with the field, stakeholders, and constituents.
- Support Midwest creativity through strategic investments and partnerships.



Caravanserai residency activities with Majid Bekkas Gnawa Ensemble and Brahim Fribgane in Jamestown, North Dakota.
Photo by Lindajoy Fenley.

Iny Asian Dance Theater members performing at Scott County Historical Society's Big Read event for *The Things They Carried*.
Photo by Kathleen Klehr, courtesy of the Scott County Historical Society.

Michigan fiber artist Carole Harris presents her work at a quilt workshop in Nanning, China.
Photo by Raymond Li, courtesy of U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou.

Cultivate mutual understanding of issues, successes, opportunities, trends, and challenges between Arts Midwest and our constituents.

- Deepen our understanding of our region's creative sector and enhance our programmatic service to them.
- Strengthen and diversify our relationships with the staff and boards of our state arts agencies.
- Build cross-sector partnerships to foster the inclusion of creative expression in everyday life.
- Enhance our role as a leading source of knowledge and information.



Arts Midwest Conference attendees network during a professional development session.

Photo by Joshua Feist.

ArtsLab grantees discuss their three-year financial needs and business model.

Photo courtesy of Arts Midwest.

Caravanserai artists Ronnie Malley, Big Samir, Zeshan Bagewadi, Asad Ali Jafri, and Amirah Sackett present their work at the 2016 Arts Midwest Conference.

Photo by Joshua Feist.



Strengthen Arts Midwest's stature, acumen, and organizational capacity.

- Cultivate and activate leadership within all levels of the organization and sustain the workplace culture of excellence.
- Elevate our identity and presence regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- Ensure that our Board and staff understand and reflect the diversity of our region.
- Develop new sources and models to enhance financial sustainability.



Arts Midwest nine-state region of North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio.

Minnesota photographer Wing Young Huie exploring new creative ideas while making friends in Guangzhou.
Photo by Raymond Li, courtesy of U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou.

Cook County (MN) residents participate in an ArtsLab retreat exploring the creative economy.
Photo courtesy of the Grand Marais Art Colony.



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Arts Midwest staff and Board at strategic planning retreat. *Photo by Joshua Feist.*

On the cover: Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater perform at the 2014 Arts Midwest Conference. *Photo by Joshua Feist.* | Friends experience *Modern Spirit: The Art of George Morrison* exhibition at Minnesota History Center. *Photo by Tiffany Rodgers.* | Jen Baik of Fort Wayne Dance Collective performs TAIKOPROJECT, supported by Arts Midwest Touring Fund. *Photo by Andy Wellie.* | Caravanserai artists Gawal Najmuddin & Brothers before their concert in Red Oak, IA. *Photo by Shigeyo Henriquez.*