Intersections

Strategic Plan

2023-2025

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Executive Director's Forward

Art galleries play a vital role in the public sphere. They provide a space for dialogue, intellectual discovery, and social connection, and they serve as activity centers for contemplation, creativity, education, and participation. Today, galleries globally are facing challenges of audience relevance, changing demographics, integration into a digital world, and financial sustainability, which require us all to adjust. To remain relevant in our communities, we must develop a more reciprocal relationship with our audiences, valuing community wisdom, views, and interests. And we must push boundaries to deliver diverse exhibitions and public programs that showcase outstanding artistic talents from various perspectives.

As we reimagine the AGB experience, we are committed to making it more accessible to a broader range of people. We will open our doors wider to audiences from unexpected and underserved places, welcoming people from all backgrounds to come together and be inspired and challenged by art. We will interact with diverse communities and serve a crucial role in fostering ongoing learning through creativity and innovation, always staying true to our commitment to supporting artists and art education.

We recognize the importance of innovation for survival, growth, and prosperity, and we must adopt new ways of thinking and working to build resilience and capacity. We will build on the legacy of our last 48 years while acknowledging the need for change and growth. The Art Gallery of Burlington is committed to being a leader in gallery best-practices and a recognized brand within Burlington and beyond. Our new plan includes an enhanced facility, financial growth, a responsive collection, engaged networks, and a focus on measuring success.

Emma Sankey

Executive Director

Art Gallery of Burlington

Board Remarks

The Art Gallery of Burlington's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan outlines the priorities needed to drive our vision for the future – one that will continue to build on the inherent connection between art and community.

From the kick-off, our board believed it was essential for us to gather input directly from stakeholders. It was especially important that our strategic plan reflected the needs of our community. Throughout the planning process, we undertook extensive engagement, and the community offered great interest and feedback that have added valuable insight to our future direction. We also convened international experts and leaders across many constituencies to ground our thinking and to explore the future of the institution.

We are proud of the outcome and excited about our outlook — one that will see education, engagement, and appreciation of art across our community. Art reflects a society and its surroundings by setting that community apart and attracting people to its uniqueness. AGB's Strategic Plan highlights our community's values and strives to create an elevated sense of awareness for gallery members and visitors.

Plan Overview

Our vision is to be known and respected as a place of intersection where creators, cultures and communities meet and share in the wealth of human creativity.

Our mission is to deliver thought-provoking exhibitions, learning opportunities and public programs that spark meaningful connections for people to learn, see, think and make; and to activate our collection of contemporary Canadian ceramics and explore the intersection of craft and contemporary art.

We embrace and are guided by six core values: 1) Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility, 2) Indigenous Reconciliation, 3) Integrity, 4) Innovation, 5) Partnership and 6) Excellence.

The plan is a living document and will guide and motivate every level within the organization toward achieving its goals through consistent monitoring and measurement. The plan recognizes that strategies and initiatives may shift, be altered, or be replaced depending on progress, completion, or unanticipated roadblocks and will evolve accordingly. Benchmarking assists in identifying desired outputs and timeframes and forms an integral part of the plan, essential to practical implementation, monitoring, and measuring to ensure the organization stays on track.

The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan is an opportunity for the organization to continue its rebuilding and repositioning to achieve optimal success in the short, medium, and long term.

The AGB is a place of intersection where creators, cultures and communities meet and share in the wealth of human creativity.

Values

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

We respect individuals from all backgrounds and identities, with diverse life experiences, and acknowledge our connectedness, commonalities, and shared humanity.

Innovation

We believe in innovation and the role that experimentation, curiosity, creativity and enjoyment play in pushing boundaries and exploring new ground.

Indigenous Reconciliation

We respect the unceded Indigenous territory upon which we are situated.

Excellence

We pride ourselves on professionalism, artistic excellence, and meaningful social impact.

Integrity

We recognize that transparency and careful stewardship of resources are essential to our operations and that fostering a culture of connection and belonging in our workforce and board drives business success and shared fiscal responsibility, creating resilience and demonstrating accountability.

Partnership

We foster community building, collaboration and outreach through open dialogue and active listening and encourage active participation and view all who engage with us as part of our story and experience.

Major Strategies

The purpose of the plan is to support two critical strategies for the AGB's sustainability. It is action-driven and tactical.

A. **FOUNDATION**

Build a Strong Foundation (Our People and Processes)

To improve operational and system efficiency; build workforce resilience and capacity; eliminate debt and grow financial support; and modernize our facility.

B. **IMPACT**

Drive Meaningful Impact (Our Programs and Partnerships)

To deliver programming content that connects to new audiences and retains current members; supports life-long learning; prioritizes community impact; advances goals around equity, diversity and inclusion; and develops new, community-centered ways of working to start reflecting the full diversity of our community.

We deliver thought-provoking exhibitions, learning opportunities and public programs that spark meaningful connections for people

A. Build a Strong Foundation

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INITIATIVES:

A.1 Prioritize financial growth

A.2 Modernize our physical spaces

A.3 Invest in our people and grow our internal culture

A.4 Improve technology resources

B. Drive Meaningful Impact

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(Our Programs and Partnerships)

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INITIATIVES:

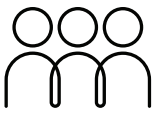
B.1 Increase Engagement and Deepen Relationships

B.2 Deliver impactful content

B.3 Expand our social impact

B.4 Expand profile and brand awareness

A.



Build a Strong Foundation (Our People and Processes)

A.1
Prioritize financial growth

Goals

-Grow AGB Shop revenues by 30% within the next two years.

-Maximize the profitability of Venue Rental program to improve ROI.

-Increase Membership revenue by 35% within the next two years.

-Increase public program and learning revenue by 10% over the next two years.

-Increase # of revenue generating programs.

-Increase core public sector support municipally and provincially, and secure federally.

-Increase private sector funding by 30% over the next two years.

-Increase net income for fall fundraising event by 50%.

-Grow our endowment by 25% within the next two years.

-Introduce new earned revenue for AGB touring exhibitions.

A.2
Modernize our physical spaces

Goals

-Improve visitor experience.

-Increase public space for programming outputs.

-Secure funds to engage Facility Master Plan and Future Needs Consultant

-Receive consultant's report as a first step in a multi-year process that will transform the Art Gallery of Burlington.

A.

Build a Strong Foundation (Our People and Processes)

A.3
Invest in our people and grow our internal culture

Goals

- Improve retention, engagement and performance of workforce and board.

-Initiate an equity, diversity, and inclusion committee to help drive action and accountability and encourage conversation.

- Engage entire organization in living our strategic plan.

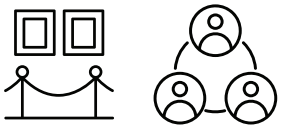
A.4
Improve technology resources

Goals

-Improve team collaboration and organizational efficiency.

-Implement best practices in database management to enhance data-driven decision making

B.



Drive Meaningful Impact (Our Programs and Partnerships)

B.1
Increase Engagement and Deepen Relationships

Goals

-Prioritize partnerships that cultivate mutual impacts for sustained relationships.

-Build trust with existing audience and expand access to new audiences.

-Create more access for professional artists across career levels.

B.2
Deliver impactful content

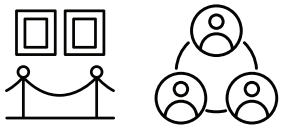
Goals

-Present programs at the intersection of contemporary art and craft that honour ancestral knowledge, tradition, and embraces radical, transformative practices.

-Strengthen and increase visibility of our Canadian contemporary ceramic collection.

-Redevelop an Artists-in-Residency program focused on creative exploration and community engagement.

B.



Drive Meaningful Impact
(Our Programs and Partnerships)

B.3
Expand our social impact

Goals

-Position the AGB Shop as a social enterprise and extension of programming.

-Expand climate sustainability framework.

B.4
Expand profile and brand awareness

Goals

-Increase # of followers and level of engagement on social media by 25%

-Increase number of e-newsletter subscribers by 25% and open rate by 10%

-Increase website visits and online engagement by 50%

-Increase # of visitors to the Gallery by 25%

-Increase average attendance at public events by 25%

-Increase media coverage and critical review of exhibitions to 4x per year

We are proud of the outcome and excited about our outlook — one that will see education, engagement, and appreciation of art across our community.

How we're going to get there

Our plan to achieve success involves improving retail operations, venue rentals, and membership programs. We will also implement a studio activation model to drive revenues and build a private sector development plan for corporations and foundations.

We are committed to upgrading our facility, engaging with EDI and Indigenous-focused cultural organizations, and increasing Indigenous artist representation. We will develop lifelong learning programs, renew our Artist Residency Program, and responsibly present exhibitions.

To reach our target audience, we will define them, engage a PR firm, and use social media to expand our reach. We will also redesign our website, clarify stakeholder needs, and connect with international communities through digital programs.

Our success will be measured by our ability to achieve the following targets: an increase in membership, excellence in program execution, exceeding visitor targets, higher participation in education and programs, elevating funding from traditional and new sources, growing strategic partnerships and collaborations, increasing usage of online resources, expanding social media following, and advancing digital initiatives. These metrics will help us gauge our progress and ensure that we are meeting our goals. By focusing on these targets, we can continue to improve our operations, serve our community better, and grow as an organization.

Special Thanks

We express our deepest gratitude to all the individuals who contributed to this plan's creation through participation, sharing their ideas, and giving valuable suggestions. We want to acknowledge the AGB team for their immense passion, creativity, and leadership, which helped initiate inspiring conversations that have set us on a path toward a bold and exciting future. We are proud to have worked alongside such a dedicated and inclusive group of AGB stakeholders, whose collective efforts have resulted in a clear, action-driven roadmap that will guide us towards success. We extend a special thank you to Sarah Robertson for her exceptional facilitation skills that helped us uncover new insights and ideas.

Funder Recognition

This work is made possible with the support of the City of Burlington.

As a non-profit art gallery, we rely on the generosity of our community and art enthusiasts to support our organization. We are grateful for our partners, whether they are members dedicated to the gallery, volunteers contributing their time and talents, or donors sponsoring an exhibition or program. The support of our philanthropic partners enables us to provide free admission, deliver cutting-edge exhibitions, and offer inclusive educational programming for all ages. To learn more about how to get involved with our work, please visit the AGB's website to explore our various engagement and philanthropic opportunities.

Land Acknowledgment

This land we know as Burlington is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations including the Anishinaabeg and the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis.

This territory is mutually covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy, the Ojibway, and other allied Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We are grateful to these Nations for sharing the land with us.

Photo Credits
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Cover Image 2 – Akash Inabkumar, Era of the Moon: Phases, 2023. Installation detail Art Gallery of Burlington. Courtesy of the artist. Photo credit: Jimmy Limit.
Cover Image 3 – AGB Pottery Studio
Pg. 2 – Summer Camp, 2023. Photo credit: Annie Webber.
Pg. 4 – AGB Camp Programming
Pg. 6 Left – Exterior Building
Pg. 6 Right – AGB Programming
Pg. 7 – The Weight of Clay, 2023. Installation detail Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo credit: Jimmy Limit.
Pg. 14 – Teen Camp Programming
Pg. 17 – The Weight of Clay, 2023. Installation detail Art Gallery of Burlington. Photo credit: Michael Routhier.

Art Gallery of Burlington

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