



# HOWARD COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 24-29

Photo by Katie Simmons-Barth: Samantha McEwen Deininger, Rising All-Star 2022

## ABOUT

As a **local arts council**, we work for the **collective benefit of arts organizations** and **artists** in Howard County. We **advocate for the arts** on a local and state level – communicating the value of the arts to elected officials and community leaders. We **provide affordable space** to exhibit, create and perform – a resource that many artists and small art organizations rely on. And we **fund the arts** – as the designated arts agency for Howard County, we award grants and provide the financial support necessary to deliver high-quality arts programming to the public.

## MISSION

We **enrich** and **uplift** our communities by **advancing the arts, artists, and arts organizations** for the **benefit of all**.

## VISION

A **diverse** and **vibrant community** where the **arts are central** to our lives.

## CORE VALUES

**CREATIVITY** Support freedom of expression and encourage innovation in traditional, emerging, and underrepresented art forms.

**EDUCATION** Promote participation and life-long learning in the arts.

**EQUITY** Actively learn to identify and dismantle barriers to successful arts-making and engagement.

**INCLUSION** Nurture the social fabric of our community by providing essential resources, opportunities, and access.

**INTEGRITY** Cultivate trust through respect, honesty, and transparency.

**SUSTAINABILITY** Manage resources to ensure the viability and growth of the arts.

## EQUITY STATEMENT

We believe everyone should have access to the creative, intellectual, spiritual, and healing benefits the arts provide. The arts celebrate our diversity, connect our shared humanity, uplift individuals, and transform communities. We are committed to creating opportunities for artists and arts organizations and to fostering an equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible arts culture in Howard County.

# PUBLIC AWARENESS, RESOURCES & ADVOCACY

Expand **public awareness**, **financial resources**, and **advocacy** to advance the arts in Howard County.

- **Expand Public Awareness:** Develop and launch a **new website** and **branding campaign** to expand access, increase staff efficiency, and build brand awareness; Evaluate **marketing** and **communication strategies** through DEIA.
- **Expand Financial Resources:** Identify **financial resources needed** to support FY24-29 strategic goals and DEIA; Allocate **funding** in **annual operating budgets** for strategic initiatives and equity efforts; Develop & deploy a **short-term resource development plan**; Develop and implement a **5-year resource and fund development plan**, including benchmarks and targets, to increase contributed and earned income; **Evaluate** contributed and earned **income strategies through DEIA**.
- **Expand Advocacy:** **Define advocacy** and its **desired impact**; Expand advocacy through cultural planning process; Advocate for **funding**, **policies**, and **practices** that **remove barriers** and advance **equitable access to the arts**.

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# ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Build **organizational capacity** to strengthen HCAC's impact in our community.

- **Build Organization Capacity:** Develop and deploy a plan to **address HCAC space needs**; Develop and deploy a **technology plan** to ensure safe, sustainable operations; Evaluate and revise **policies** and **organizational systems** through DEIA to **resolve any structural inequities**.
- **Build Board Capacity:** Conduct **Board self-assessment** & create **DEIA asset map**; Create **Board ambassadorship program** and capitalize on Board connections to build a leadership pipeline and identify prospective donors.
- **Build Staff Capacity:** Create tool and space to capture and assess **staff culture** and **communication**; Evaluate **personnel handbook**, **staffing model**, and **policies** through DEIA to optimize engagement and improve staff retention; Assess & align **staff capacity** and **salaries annually**.

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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Increase and deepen **community engagement** to strengthen the arts ecosystem.

- **Expand HCAC grants program to include merit-based awards for individual artists:** **Secure funding** from MSAC and Howard County; Develop and deploy **individual artist grant program**.
- **Develop a cultural plan for Howard County centered in equity:** **Secure funding** from local, state, and national funders; Identify and **convene cultural plan task force**; Develop, test, and **adopt a cultural plan** to guide future policy & funding decisions; Develop and **deploy annual evaluation** and assessment practices to facilitate ongoing learning; **Build bridge** from the cultural plan to resource development.
- **Expand professional development opportunities in arts administration:** Create and deploy **paid BIPOC** arts administration **internship** program.

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# EVALUATION

Evaluate HCAC programs and services to better serve artists and audiences.

- **Develop and deploy modular evaluation tools to assess programs and services through DEIA:** Deploy existing **program evaluation tool** through DEIA; Design **modular evaluation tool** through DEIA; Evaluate **all core programs** and **services**.