

# 5-Year Strategic Plan

statement   
**ARTS**  
Art for a Conscious World



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*StART Young students at United Palace in Washington Heights, NYC*

# Head of the Board Letter

Dear friends,

Welcome to our very first Strategic Plan for Statement Arts. We never imagined how interesting and eye-opening the planning process would be. Originally, our goal of these planning processes was to refine our mission statement. We realized that the organization was ready for something much bigger. Our team of board members and internal staff spent hundreds of hours researching, presenting, discussing, questioning, refining, and then unanimously agreeing to a vision, a set of common values, and a mission statement. We also developed key focus areas with goals and priorities for the next five years that will help us achieve financial and operational sustainability.

We hope you take the time to read about Statement Arts and all that it has to offer young people as they find their places in the world. We welcome you to visit to all of our programs; if you are like me, it will be love at first sight. You will join a team of extremely dedicated and hard-working people whose common interest is to give our students the tools they need to reach their goals and help open the doors to a fabulous future.

All the best,



Ashley Garrett  
Board President

## BOARD MEMBERS

**Liza Politi** Founder, Artistic Director, & Board Treasurer at Statement Arts

**Ashley Garrett** Board President, Ashley Garrett Photography

**Alexis Tener Petrus** Vice President, Tener Petrus Associates, PLLC

**Zahaira Curiel** Alum & Board Secretary at Statement Arts

**Minelly De Coo** Senior Advisor, NYC Office of the Deputy Mayor for Operations

**Matthew DeCrosta** Morgan Stanley

**Keith Petrus** Morgan Stanley

**Marcus Richardson** Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives, CUNY, Brooklyn College

## KEY PERSONNEL

**Jessie Lee** Director of Operations

**Mildred Gil** Program Coordinator

**Danielle Hernandez** Design Strategist

**We are creating a 5-year  
strategic plan for all of our  
stakeholders and StART family  
members in order to support  
the growth of the organization.**

WHAT

FOR WHOM

WHY

## PURPOSE

Our purpose of strategic planning is to develop a comprehensive view of the current landscape of Statement Arts, define the future state of Statement Arts, and develop a customized and practical roadmap to achieve operational and financial sustainability. Our 5-year strategic plan enables the organization to grow by diversifying funding sources, building program and operational capacity with scalability based on emerging needs, analyzing data and metrics to measure intended impact, and fine-tuning the communications and marketing strategies.

## APPROACH

A phase-based approach was used to develop the 5-year strategic plan to deliver intended impact while building capacity to support the growth of the organization. The following key phases were:

- **Explore** the future by refining the mission, vision, and values to set a foundation for developing both long-term strategy and goals to expand current programs and develop new programs
- **Learn** about the environment by conducting an external environmental scan and benchmarking analysis to understand and identify current environmental factors and future trends
- **Understand** the current landscape through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) to identify the current programmatic and operational landscape, including capabilities and limitations
- **Define** our 2025 future state to develop our strategic focus areas, goals and objectives to achieve our mission

# Our Future

The revised vision and mission statements provide strategic clarity, representing who we are as an organization.

## VISION

A vision statement is the future we envision for the organization.

OUR VISION STATEMENT WAS	OUR NEW VISION STATEMENT IS
to help vulnerable youth create new statements about themselves and what is possible through performing arts	A socially engaged world where young people express their own STATEMENTS

## MISSION

A mission statement articulates what and how we create the future to which we aspire. The mission statement is a succinct expression of our essential reason for existence or core purpose.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT WAS	OUR NEW MISSION STATEMENT IS *
Statement Arts is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to bringing the creative visual & performing arts to underserved and/ or low-income individuals. We channel creativity to educate, to enhance intellectual performance, to empower and guide, and to build self-esteem. Statement Arts is committed to giving our students an intercultural and interdisciplinary arts experience to which they do not have access. Statement Arts believes in the power of art to inspire social, cultural, and environmental education to further a legacy of responsible global citizenship.	Statement Arts believes in the power of an integrated arts education to cultivate the next generation of leaders who can inspire social and cultural change. Our holistic approach supports young people and offers the space for them to find their voices and add their statements to the world.

## VALUES

Values are the core principles that will guide us through difficult decisions and challenges while achieving our mission.

**Artistic Exploration:** we encourage creativity and curiosity

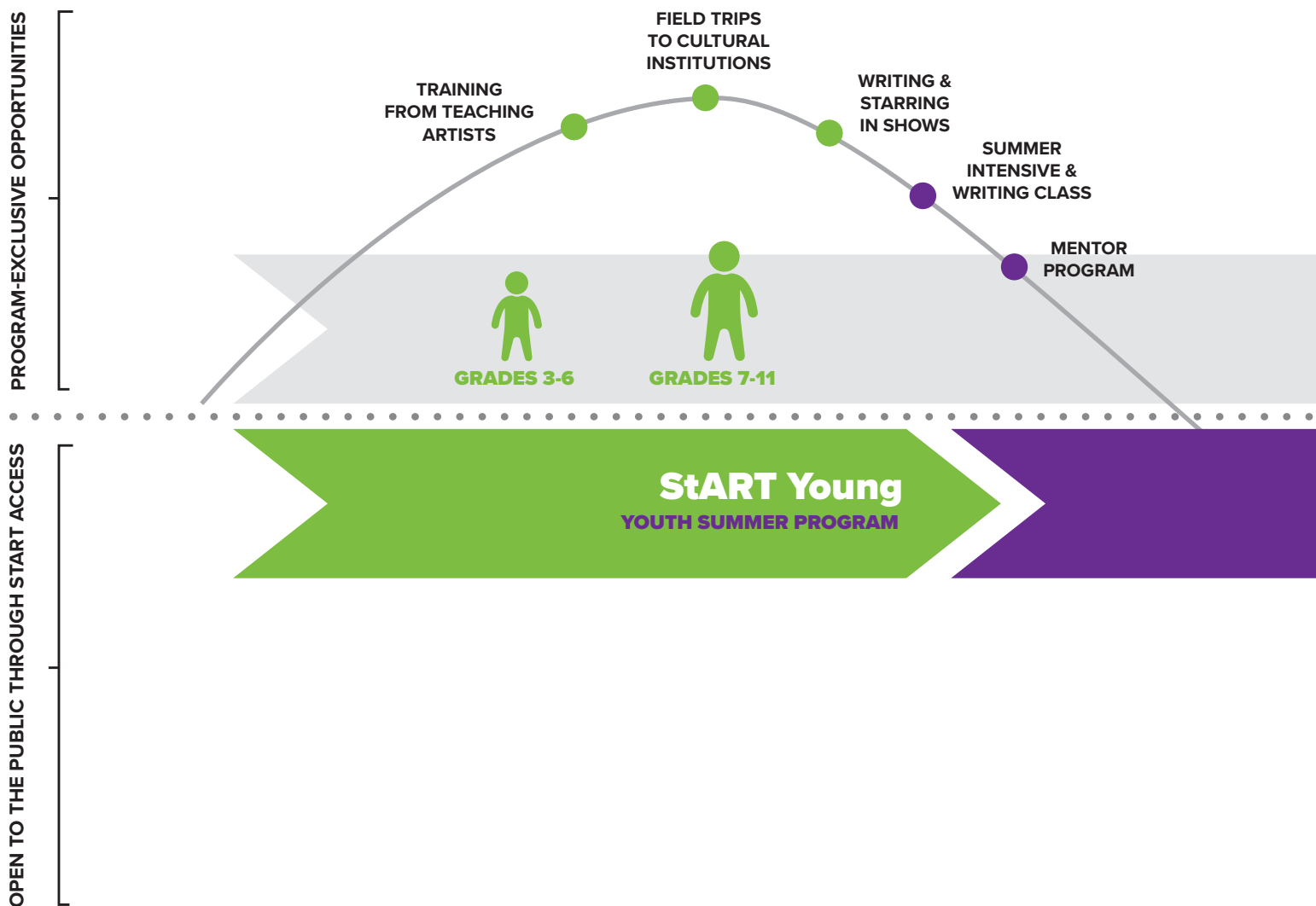
**Education:** we support lifelong learning

**Compassion:** we cultivate family and community through empathy and respect

**Authenticity:** we value commitment, responsibility and resilience

**Social Justice:** we advocate for a socially just world that recognizes and celebrates uniqueness

# Our Continuum of Service

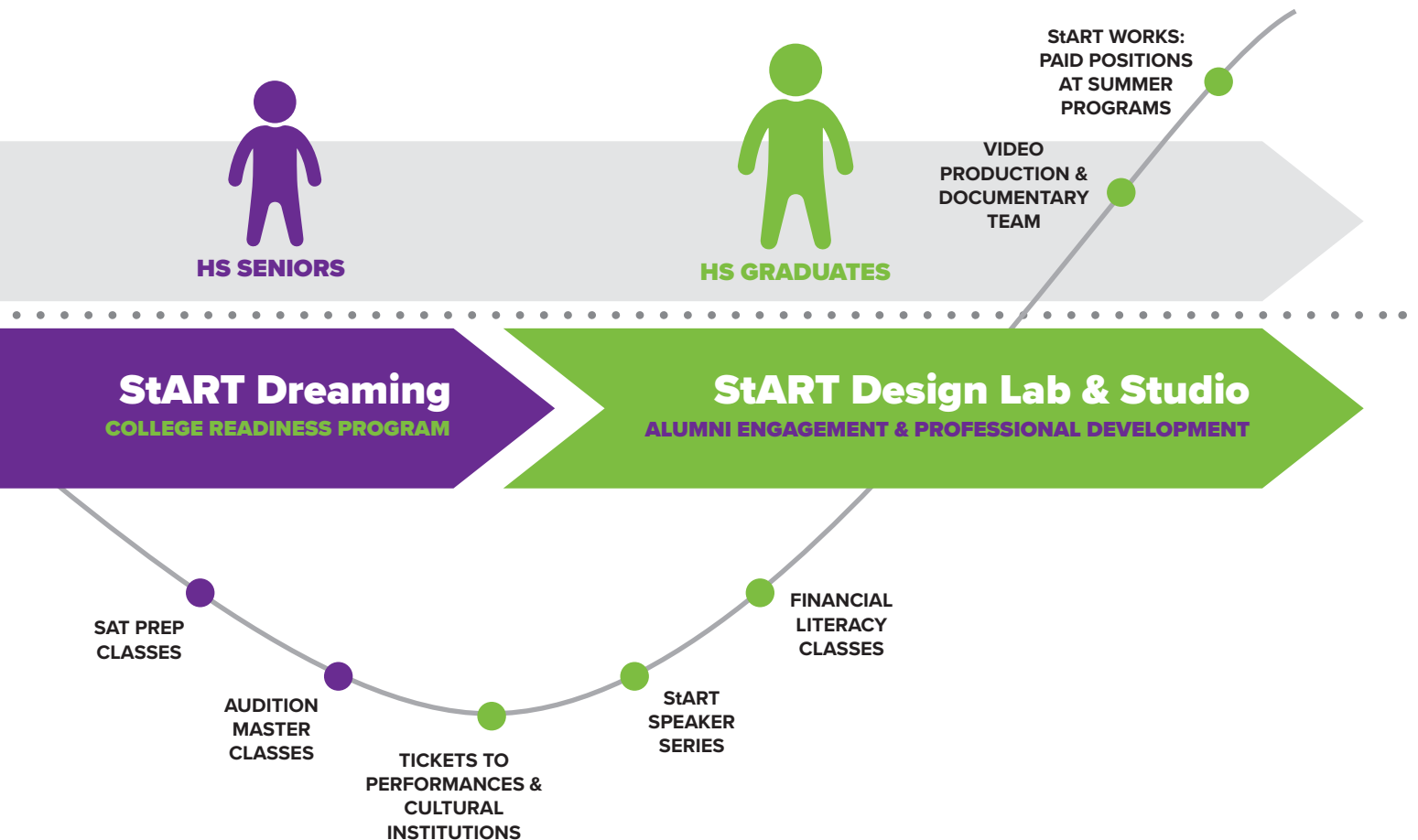


## Our Landscape

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis (SWOT) led us to identify our capabilities and limitations as well as our aspirations.

### PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- **Formalize** needs assessment to measure impact based on quality of programs
- **Provide** structured support for teaching artists to design and manage classes
- **Expand** summer program activities for both StART Young and StART Dreaming programs
- **Provide** diverse activities outside of the summer programs and core performing arts activities



## ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

- **Create** structured and organized talent management to attract diverse talents and deliver higher quality programs
- **Obtain** talent and resources to adopt innovative technology for operations and program development
- **Create** business continuity and contingency plans to build operational resilience
- **Strengthen** financial resilience by diversifying funding sources
- **Develop** well-defined roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, and prioritization processes

## DATA MANAGEMENT

- **Develop and implement** data management processes and solutions to support fundraising strategy and program improvement
- **Centralize** documents and records to increase operational efficiency

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGY

- **Create** broader and stronger visibility to recruit students for all programs
- **Obtain** resources and talent to develop structured communication and marketing operations

# Our Environment

An environmental scan was conducted to understand and identify factors and emerging changes impacting operations and sustainability of the organization.

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Develop programmatic and strategic partnerships with school administrators, foundation grant managers, arts education networks, arts professional networks, and organizations providing similar programs and organizations providing holistic services.

## ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

Enable the organization to be nimble and flexible to be ready for emerging changes and crises.

- **Implement** holistic budget management through scenario planning
- **Strengthen** operational structure to expand programs and increase efficiency and effectiveness
- **Make** data-driven decisions based on strategic and global views
- **Maintain** a robust document management system with strong privacy policies

## DATA MANAGEMENT

Develop data management solutions to support impact management and fundraising

## FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

- **Identify** funding for data management, virtual learning solutions, staffing, venues, and communications and marketing capability
- **Expand** donors through leveraging the networks of staff, teaching artists, board members, vendors, champions, and major donors

## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING STRATEGY

- **Create** broader and stronger visibility to attract funders and donors
- **Ensure** ongoing and stronger donor communications are aligned with fundraising strategy

StART Dreaming students at Punto Space in NYC





# 2025 Future

To achieve our mission, we created a shared vision for 2025. Based on these visions, strategic focus areas were designed.

Our programs reach more young people in all boroughs of NYC through arts education and holistic support services



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility are embedded in how and what we do through a collaborative and creative culture with strong values



We are financially stable and have the flexibility to develop and expand programs that serve the needs of our young people



We are operating under well-organized and structured processes and protocols with talented human capital for our programs and operations



We are capable of leveraging innovative technology and data to improve overall effectiveness and efficiency



We have easy access to physical and virtual spaces to manage programs as we grow and transform our programs



StART Family at Morgan Stanley Billboard Launch Times Square, NYC

# Strategic Focus Areas and Goals

Four strategic focus areas and goals were developed to achieve the aforementioned 2025 future state that is aligned with our vision and mission.

Please note: a priority is assigned at each objective level, therefore, the order of focus areas and numbering of the goals is for discussion purposes only rather than indicating priorities or sequence. Please see the appendix for the list of objectives and priorities for each focus area and goal.



## Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (D.E.I.A.) in operations and program management;

### Goal 1

Integrate D.E.I.A. spectrum in operations and program management

### Goal 2

Strengthen D.E.I.A. culture



## Strengthen financial sustainability and flexibility to support the growth of the organization;

### Goal 1

Increase funding while diversifying funding sources

### Goal 2

Establish fundraising management structure aligned with budget planning and grant cycles

### Goal 3

Explore and identify potential revenue sources

### Goal 4

Establish capital reserve and endowment



## Strengthen programmatic and operational sustainability and flexibility;

<b>Goal 1</b>	Develop human capital management structure
<b>Goal 2</b>	Build program management and operational structure
<b>Goal 3</b>	Develop program development structure
<b>Goal 4</b>	Develop and implement communications and social media strategy
<b>Goal 5</b>	Develop and implement data management and data analytics strategy
<b>Goal 6</b>	Develop virtual learning environment to support program expansion
<b>Goal 7</b>	Identify and manage organizational risks
<b>Goal 8</b>	Strengthen governance structure to engage with broader stakeholders
<b>Goal 9</b>	Create capabilities to source physical spaces for programs



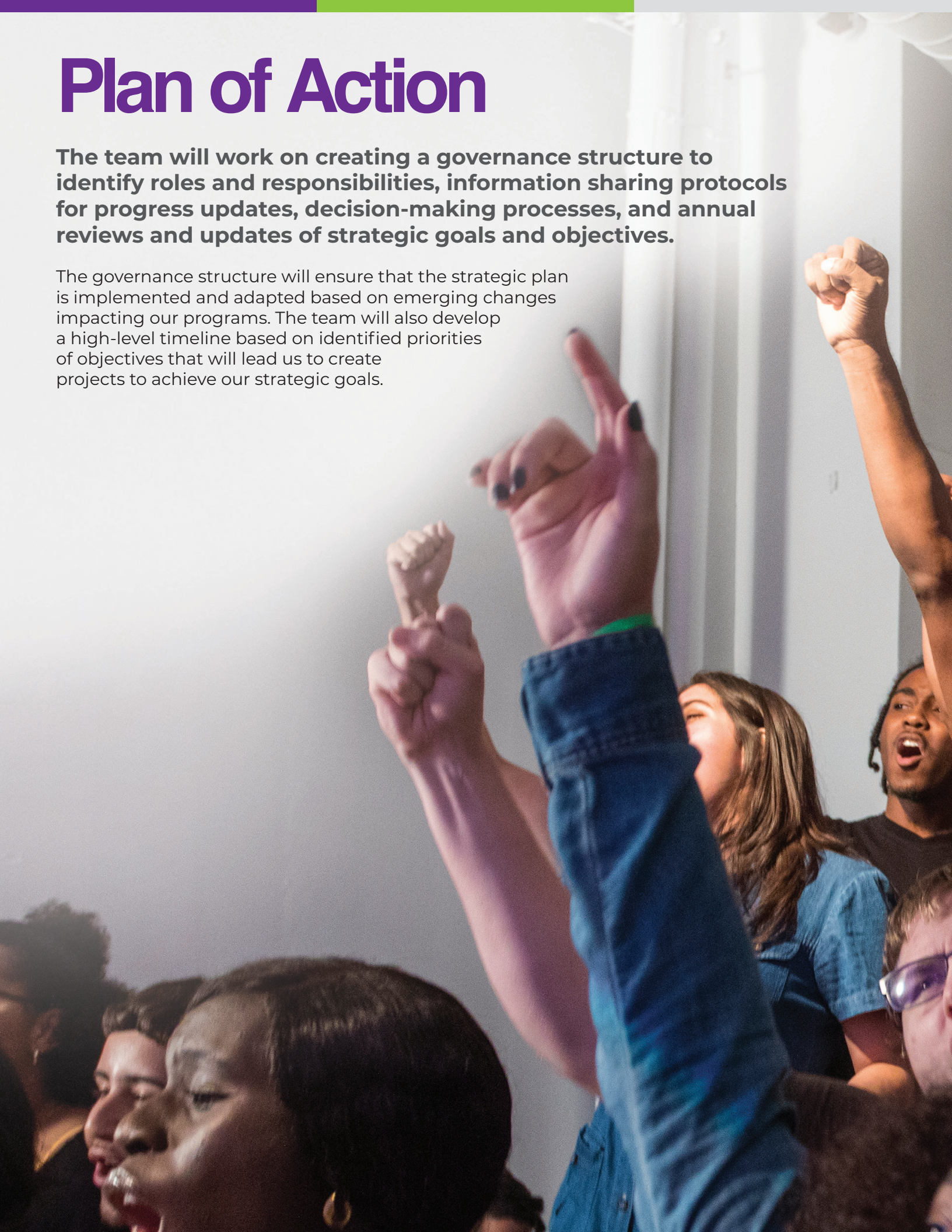
## Expand programs throughout NYC by creating holistic education and support programs;

<b>Goal 1</b>	Expand summer programs to serve greater number of young people in all boroughs of NYC
<b>Goal 2</b>	Expand higher education support program
<b>Goal 3</b>	Develop program foundations to expand to other states and beyond
<b>Goal 4</b>	Develop Design Lab Studio Program to bridge between college and career

# Plan of Action

**The team will work on creating a governance structure to identify roles and responsibilities, information sharing protocols for progress updates, decision-making processes, and annual reviews and updates of strategic goals and objectives.**

The governance structure will ensure that the strategic plan is implemented and adapted based on emerging changes impacting our programs. The team will also develop a high-level timeline based on identified priorities of objectives that will lead us to create projects to achieve our strategic goals.



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StART Dreaming students at Punto Space in NYC



# What's Next?

Following is a list of objectives and assigned priorities that are associated with strategic focus areas and goals. Further details are available in our Strategic Focus Areas, Goals and Objectives template.



## Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (D.E.I.A.) in operations and program management;

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
Strengthen D.E.I.A. culture	Develop D.E.I.A. policy
	Establish D.E.I.A. training and awareness programs for Board, Staff, and Students
Integrate D.E.I.A. spectrum in operations and program management	Create D.E.I.A. lens/criteria into organization's decision making process for programs and operations
	Develop recruitment processes and policies with tangible and intangible incentives for diverse and high quality talents through DEIA criteria



## Strengthen Financial sustainability and flexibility to support the growth of the organization;

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
<b>Establish fundraising management structure aligned with budget planning and grant cycles</b>	Develop annual budget planning processes based on program funding needs, grant cycles, strategic goals, and operational and financial risk scenarios
	Create network map to manage current and potential funding sources
<b>Increase funding while diversifying funding sources</b>	Create and manage a 3-year fundraising plan to diversity funding sources (governments, foundations, corporate matching funds, corporate sponsorship, and donor advised funds.)
	Develop fundraising event planning toolkits
	Develop and manage recurring donation program
	Increase in kind donations (laptops, internet costs, food, spaces, etc.)
<b>Explore and identify potential revenue sources</b>	Assess outcomes of Design Lab as a revenue source
	Develop options for other revenue sources
<b>Establish capital reserve and endowment</b>	Establish capital reserve % of annual operating budget
	Create endowment for investment income as a revenue source to diversify funding sources



StART Young students at the Sugar Hill Children's Museum



## Strengthen programmatic and operational sustainability and flexibility;

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
<b>Develop program development structure</b>	Establish program design requirements and checklists including curriculum design protocols
	Develop needs assessment process and impact metrics development toolkits
	Implement program design training protocols and processes
<b>Build program management and operational structure</b>	Develop program management handbook for students, staff, teaching artists, volunteers, and partnered organizations
	Develop external facing protocols for social and mental health program development and management
	Develop data privacy policy for staff, board, volunteers, students, parents and partnered organizations
<b>Develop human capital management structure</b>	Obtain dedicated resource to manage human capital
	Create on/off boarding process and protocols for staff, teaching artists, interns, volunteers, and others
<b>Develop virtual learning environment to support program expansion</b>	Expand learning management system for all programs
	Establish virtual teaching training program course design protocols
	Develop virtual program environment management procedures
<b>Develop and implement data management and data analytics strategy</b>	Develop clear ways to measure and evaluate and then communicate impact of programs



<b>Develop and implement data management and data analytics strategy</b>	Develop collective impact data management tools and processes
	Establish continuous feedback loop for each program
	Maintain and expand donors database
<b>Identify and manage organizational risks</b>	Identify and assess key strategic, financial and operational risks annually
	Develop and implement business continuity and emergency response plan
<b>Develop and implement communications and social media strategy</b>	Hire social media and communications staff/intern/volunteer
	Develop communication and development protocols to create toolkits for major donors and funders
	Create communications and marketing plan to recruit new donors, targeting across generations
	Create impact communication toolkits
	Develop social media management processes and calendar
<b>Strengthen governance structure to engage with broader stakeholders</b>	Growing the board to increase funding and strengthening diversity based on skills, experience, network, etc.
	Establish parents advisory board to assess needs and integrate ideas for higher impact
	Develop engagement model between the board of directors, and alumni and parents advisory boards
	Establish stakeholders engagement process for strategic planning
	Create alumni board to leverage their experience and ideas to improve and grow programs while cultivating future leaders of the organization
<b>Create capabilities to source physical spaces for programs</b>	Develop additional strategic partnerships with venues
	Develop physical space roadmap for operations and programs



## Expand programs throughout NYC by creating holistic education and support programs;

GOAL	OBJECTIVE
<p><b>Expand summer programs to serve greater number of young people in all boroughs of NYC</b></p>	<p>StART Young Summer: Expand the duration of the program by adding additional weeks</p>
	<p>StART Dreaming: Expand the duration of the program by adding additional weeks</p>
	<p>StART Young Summer: Extend program classes to full day classes</p>
	<p>StART Young Summer: Increase the number of students from each district/ neighborhood</p>
	<p>StART Dreaming: Increase the number of students from each district/ neighborhood</p>
<p><b>Expand higher education support program</b></p>	<p>Establish social and mental health support program activities including training and awareness classes through partnerships with other organizations</p>
	<p>Expand college preparation programs by adding life skills (cooking, financial management, etc.)</p>
	<p>Develop and implement college support programs to complete higher education and prepare to manage careers</p>
<p><b>Develop program foundations to expand to other states and beyond</b></p>	<p>Create community outreach program to train teaching artists and volunteers to advocate for our programs</p>
<p><b>Develop Design Lab Studio Program to bridge between college and career</b></p>	<p>Develop Design Lab Program to serve as incubator for future artistic professionals and leaders</p>

# A Final Word from Our Founder

I have been teaching theater arts to New York City kids for almost 20 years. I so vividly remember stepping into that Hell's Kitchen school for the first time and being surrounded by this gaggle of teenagers with their high voltage smiles and boundless energy. I remember the sheer joy and spontaneous applause that would erupt out of them when a classmate delivered great work. I was so impressed with their courage and their willingness to try things that clearly scared the beejesus out of them.

They weren't the only ones who were scared. I had never taught before and had no idea what I was doing! I also had no idea that that first fateful class would completely change the trajectory of my life. I had zero plan (or training) to start a nonprofit that would work to empower these kids so they could live out their hopes and dreams. In truth, I did not expect to fall in love with them. If I am honest, the story of Statement Arts is one of great love - that is why we succeed. Everyone who gets involved with the organization - the kids, staff, volunteers, donors, Board members - feels this palpable love. We are a family. And like all families, we have our strengths and weaknesses; some things we knock out of the park and other things we stumble over.

If you would have told me 20 years ago that I would spending my days writing grants and begging for money or filling out reams of paperwork to maintain our nonprofit compliance or that I would be taking midnight calls from kids in crisis, I would have told you, you were nuts. But, here I sit, in the middle of COVID, writing about the very best thing I have done with my life.

I mention all of this - our past, our present - to set the stage for our future. Our incredibly active Board and staff spent many, many nights during the COVID lockdown drafting this strategic plan. As the Founder, I am blessed to be surrounded by such a passionate team who have taken my fledgling attempts to level the playing field for some pretty terrific young people and have elevated them to such success and standing. In the pages of this plan, we dug down deep confronting the problems we have encountered. We dug until we hit bedrock, a solid base of understanding from which we can continue to build up and out. Our vision is one of love, hope, inclusion, grace and grit. We may still be small but we are mighty and I am hopeful that with enough support to enact our plan, we will grow large and our impact will be beyond measure.

With such gratitude,



Liza Politi  
Founder, Statement Arts

# Thank You For Your Ongoing Support



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[statementarts.org](http://statementarts.org)

