



# Guilford Art Center Strategic Plan 2023-2026

- March 2023.

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# Mission & Purpose Statements

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*Mission:* The Guilford Art Center inspires and promotes community participation in the visual arts through education, exhibitions, and events.

*Purpose statement:* Guilford Art Center is a comprehensive and inclusive community environment for arts education and appreciation, providing:

- Classes in the visual arts
- Gallery exhibitions of contemporary art, with a focus on American art
- A shop of unique works by local and nationally-recognized artists
- Events for the community that creatively engage and inspire



# Values

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GAC believes the transformative power of art can catalyze societal change, strengthen our community, and inspire the development of individual skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and mindfulness through:

- Public participation in the arts
- Preservation of craft traditions
- Providing a supportive and inclusive environment for individual enrichment and communal learning
- Encouraging innovation
- Supporting the work and livelihood of American artists



**Program Goal I:**  
*Provide quality arts education opportunities to benefit the community.*

**Rationale**

- Arts education strengthens communities and GAC is positioned to provide impact.

**Strategies**

- Cultivate a welcoming environment that fosters both individual enrichment, communal learning, and cultural equity.
- Create programming that incorporates 80-90% demand-based/core and 10-20% innovative learning opportunities.
- Recruit and support high quality faculty and visiting artists.
- Plan, implement, and maintain improvements to the physical plant in support of evolving operational needs.
- Pursue outreach opportunities.



**Program Goal 2:**  
*Optimize the gallery space.*

**Rationale**

- Community members value and seek regular access to exhibits of contemporary art.

**Strategies**

- Develop a schedule of annual, GAC-generated, and rental exhibition.
- Provide educational programming with exhibitions.
- 2023: Explore feasibility of offering the gallery as a community gathering space.



**Program Goal 3:**  
*Showcase and support artisans and provide community inspiration through the Shop.*

### **Rationale**

- Artisans face multiple challenges to having their work seen and acquired by art enthusiasts.

### **Strategies**

- Curate and procure a wide range of unique works by artisans at varied price points.
- 2023: Initiate, with staff, a Task Force to reimagine possibilities for the Shop.



**Program Goal 4:**  
*Sustain the annual Craft Expo as a high-quality inspirational event that engages the community with the arts.*

## **Rationale**

- Craft Expo is a key fundraiser contributing 19% of annual revenue to the Center; a beloved community event; and respected nationally as a “go- to” venue among artists and collectors.

## **Strategy**

- Collaborate with Artrider Productions for success of event.
- Market year-round as integral to GAC programming.





## **Program Goal 5: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

### **Rationale**

- Policies and practices that value diversity, equity, and inclusion strengthen all aspects of our organization, including sound governance, operational accessibility and programming.

### **Strategies**

- Seek diversity in representation of instructors, vendors, exhibitors, jurors and curators, as well as in program content.
- Through programmatic efforts, seek to broaden representation in GAC audience.
- Emphasize hiring practices that encourage diverse applicants.
- Recruit diverse board membership.

## **Management and Operational Goal:**

*Facilities and staff will promote programmatic mission.*

## **Rationale**

GAC's campus and the work of the staff are essential to ensuring students and visitors achieve individual goals and that the community benefits from the arts.

## **Strategies**

- Build and upgrade campus facilities to achieve fullest efficiency and effectiveness.
- 2023: Update HR policies, processes and procedures.
- 2024: Implement staff professional development opportunities.



## **Governance**

### **Goal:**

*Board of Directors  
will be fully engaged  
in providing  
directional strategy  
for the Center.*

### **Rationale**

The board has a fiduciary responsibility for the health of GAC and for stewarding its mission.

### **Strategies**

- Recruit diverse members with balanced skill sets.
- Orient and train members to be fully engaged and able to fulfill fiduciary and strategic responsibilities, as well as serve as enthusiastic ambassadors for GAC.



# Governance Strategies Implementation

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Orient and train members to be fully engaged and able to fulfill fiduciary and strategic responsibilities as well as serve as an enthusiastic ambassador for GAC.

## Implementation

- Keep orientation materials current.
- Maintain new board member “buddy system.”
- Stagger terms of board members to ensure robust number serve at all times.
- Develop board leadership succession process.
- Review by-laws with drafting of each strategic plan.
- Attend board workshops.
- 2023: Establish annual board self-evaluation.
- 2023: Create staff leadership succession plans (emergency and permanent).
- 2023: Add a board portal to increase board comprehension and engagement.



# Sustainability Goal

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Sustainability Goal: Guilford Art Center will meet its expenses through earned and contributed income.

Rationale: The benefit of both earned and contributed income allows GAC to adjust operational and fundraising tactics as necessary to meet its sustainability goal.

Strategies:

- Maintain (or exceed) school operations at break-even status.
- Reimagine the Shop as proportional to other GAC revenue activities.
- Focus fundraising efforts on major gifts and deferred giving, and *include* annual appeal, sponsorships, grants, events income.
- Continue Craft Expo as a significant fundraiser for GAC.
- Explore partnership/outreach opportunities to position GAC in achieving revenue, programming and cultural equity goals.

