

Executive Summary

South Dakota Arts Council introduces a new strategic plan to be carried through our FY 2020. It begins now, FY 2018. **Our focus is on Equity. Throughout the next three years, we will strive to shift our work from equal to equitable through policy, process, and practice.**

We seek to develop a sustainable equity practice through access, inclusion, diversity and equality. In order to develop this practice, we will need to organize the power structure between our state agency, partner organizations, and constituencies to work in a way that more fully democratizes voices. We'll also need to engage in more collective processes and leave room for mistakes. As an agency, we will work to operationalize equitable practices into our daily routine and refocus on impacts and outcomes, rather than intentions in order to counter-act bias.

Our overarching goal, Striving for Equity, takes us in a new direction with our plan. Throughout our public input process we learned that many of our longtime goals are still widely supported, but achieving them requires a vastly different approach. The current political environment is fracturing communities and the arts can help people persevere through the difficult times and understand each other, when no other method of communication seems to work.

Three driving forces guide us through our plan as we Strive for Equity: **Learn, Connect, Progress.**

Learn; Goal 1. K-12 Arts Education: Work to improve access to and inclusion of arts education in K-12 schools.

Learn; Goal 2. Workforce Development: Promote youth participation in the arts to develop skills and careers. Motivate and support artists and arts businesses to flourish in our state.

Learn; Goal 3. Professional Development: Provide and support continuing professional development opportunities to artists and arts leaders throughout South Dakota.

Connect; Goal 1. Resources and Information: Develop regular, ongoing methods for artists, organizations, and communities to access information and resources to support their needs in the arts.

Connect; Goal 2. Outreach and Technical Assistance: Increase efforts to include the voices of all South Dakotans and access to staff or other professionals to assist in individual and community efforts to advance the arts.

Connect; Goal 3. Cooperation: Advance shared goals through partnerships with other state agencies, private entities, and the business community.

Progress; Goal 1. Community Development: Foster strong communities locally and statewide with a sense of place that is creative and beneficial to all.

Progress; Goal 2. The Essential Arts: Clearly and effectively communicate the importance of the arts in education, community livability, and the economy to policy-makers and stakeholders throughout South Dakota.

Each of these goals has major objectives we will strive to meet throughout the three-year plan. We continue to develop our work plan and a performance measurement tool to track our progress.

Established in 1966 and funded by the State Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts, the **South Dakota Arts Council** (SDAC) is a state agency serving South Dakotans and their communities through the arts. The Council is the advisory board to the SDAC staff within the Department of Tourism. Council members are appointed by the Governor.

Mission. The mission of the South Dakota Arts Council is to make quality arts programs accessible throughout the state through funds, services and information.

Vision. Our vision is to transform South Dakota's communities and people through the arts. We see deeper public awareness broadening appreciation for the fine arts; better arts education reviving school environments; wider access to the arts fostering understanding among cultures; and artists and arts organizations enhancing the quality of life for all South Dakotans.

Beliefs. We maintain these public values:

- ❖ Greater public awareness of the value of the arts fosters sustained public and private support.
- ❖ Arts Education stimulates creativity, communication, and lifelong learning.
- ❖ Universal access to the arts is intrinsic to the well-being of all South Dakotans.
- ❖ Artists are central to the creative environment of South Dakota.
- ❖ Arts organizations contribute to vibrant, progressive communities.
- ❖ The arts play an essential role in cultural tourism

Strategies. The South Dakota Arts Council will use six major strategies to meet objectives and achieve our goals.

- Strategy 1: Grantmaking
- Strategy 2: Policy & Advisory
- Strategy 3: Services & Programs
- Strategy 4: Information and Assistance
- Strategy 5: Professional Development & Training
- Strategy 6: Partnership & Collaboration

Overarching Goal: Striving for Equity

As our communities and constituency changes in South Dakota we recognize the need for a focus on more inclusive and equitable processes and practices at our state arts agency and throughout our state as a whole. We believe the public arts and culture sector can lead the way to more cohesive communities by providing a platform for and amplifying the voices of the most effective communicators in our society: artists.

As we work toward our strategic goals for arts advancement in South Dakota, we will prioritize access, inclusion, diversity and equity with each step, taking care not to conflate these strategies, as we recognize they are not interchangeable. We will work to create a comprehensive equity strategy that will render possibilities for envisioning and creating equity. In order to achieve this overarching goal, we recognize the need to include a multitude of voices throughout the entirety of our process. We will seek out these voices to ensure all constituents are being heard.

We will adopt the principles and strategies of Culturally Responsive Evaluation throughout our programming and planning, which we hope will result in more community engagement, deeper insight, and stronger outcomes. Our Culturally Responsive Evaluation methods will be responsive to root needs, culture, social justice, and potential. Our evaluative methods will focus on outcomes and impact, rather than intentions, as oppression is often unintentional.

Through evaluation of our work throughout the past three years, we have found our most underserved constituencies in South Dakota include: American Indian artists and the people in the communities within the borders of the nine Indian reservations in South Dakota; people of color, refugee and immigrant populations; people with disabilities; non-English speaking people; low-income individuals and families; rural communities that are geographically isolated; and many K-12 students throughout our state. All strategies and tactics used to work toward our major goals will intentionally seek input from, provide opportunities for, and cultivate meaningful and lasting partnerships with our most underserved communities.

We are called to fairly serve and represent all South Dakotans as stewards of the public trust. The South Dakota Arts Council is mindful of taxpayers' dollars that advance the arts in South Dakota and takes seriously this great responsibility.

In addition to our overarching goal, our plan for the next three years is led by three driving forces:

Learn, Connect, Progress

Learn

Goals:

- 1) K-12 Arts Education: Work to improve access to and inclusion of arts education in K-12 schools.
- 2) Workforce Development: Promote youth participation in the arts to develop skills and careers. Motivate and support artists and arts businesses to flourish in our state.
- 3) Professional Development: Provide and support continuing professional development opportunities to artists and arts leaders throughout South Dakota.

Connect

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- 1) Resources and Information: Develop regular, ongoing methods for artists, organizations, and communities to access information and resources to support their needs in the arts.
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Goals:

- 1) Community Development: Foster strong communities locally and statewide with a sense of place that is creative and beneficial to all.
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Learn

Lifelong learning through the arts has been a priority for the South Dakota Arts Council, and that continues into our 2018-2020 Strategic Plan. Through our own experience and observations, we know many K-12 students in South Dakota lack access to comprehensive arts education. This issue was emphasized by the public throughout our strategic planning process, as well. Because of this gap, we recognize the need for greater efforts to effect change in our schools.

We believe that making strides in K-12 Arts Education drives a more urgent need for Arts Council focus on workforce development. Diverse arts education programs—in and out of school curricula—have proven to be valuable options for states seeking to develop advanced workforce skills for students. Comprehensive arts education opportunities lead to the acquisition of job skills and the development of creative thinking, problem solving, and communications skills. We also strive to promote careers in the arts and look for creative ways to connect students to professional artists and arts businesses to help foster the professional arts sector in South Dakota. We believe these connections will support students, artists and businesses and help advance a vibrant arts economy in our state.

Directly related to our other arts learning goals, is continued, high-caliber professional development. We can help advance learning in and through the arts by expanding access to and frequency of these opportunities. We believe this is the best way to perpetuate and augment the outcomes of our K-12 Arts Education and Workforce Development goals.

What will we do?

Goals:

- 1) K-12 Arts Education: Work to improve access to and inclusion of arts education in K-12 schools.
- 2) Workforce Development: Promote youth participation in the arts to develop skills and careers. Motivate and support artists and arts businesses to flourish in our state.
- 3) Professional Development: Provide and support continuing professional development opportunities to artists, arts specialists, and arts leaders throughout South Dakota.

How will we do it?

Approach/Methods:

Learn, Goal 1:

Impact vision: We envision a K-12 public education system that puts greater value on arts education and knows the South Dakota Arts Council as a resource to help educators, administrators and policymakers address issues of access and inequity for students.

Goal 1: K-12 Arts Education: Work to improve access to and inclusion of arts education in K-12 schools.

- Implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act at the local level is our most direct and effective means of engaging school districts to commit to meaningful arts education curricula throughout a child's K-12 journey. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** In partnership with our statewide advocacy agency, Arts South Dakota, we will recruit and build a network of arts education advocates throughout the state who can serve as local influencers in their communities and districts to enlist others in a grassroots effort to lobby for improved arts education in schools. We will arm them with information and effective strategies for communicating with local school boards and school administrators to make the case for including the arts in the school's ESSA plan.
 - **Year 2:** We will partner with our state Department of Education to develop communications with and help serve as a resource for school administrators and teachers to provide technical assistance and advisory on high-caliber arts education programming; opportunities for including the arts in ESSA; and professional development for teachers and administrators.
 - **Continuous:** We will maintain our Arts in Education grants and programming and work toward improving them to more equitably meet the needs and wants of our constituents.



Learn, Goal 2:

Impact vision: Students will leave school prepared for college or career with New Economy Workforce Skills developed through the arts. The arts will be considered a viable career path among students, parents, educators, employers, policymakers, and the general public with the value of the contributions of the arts to community and economy recognized widely.

Goal 2: Workforce Development: Promote youth participation in the arts to develop skills and careers. Motivate and support artists and arts businesses to flourish in our state.

- Stressing the necessity of arts education to help students develop various competencies to thrive in the workforce and providing support structures for our state's existing professional careers in the arts are vital to our state's economy, community vibrancy, and quality of life. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** We will engage in a sustained public awareness campaign, providing multiple platforms for students, artists, and arts leaders in both the nonprofit and business sectors to effectively communicate these facts – The arts help students develop advanced workforce skills; The arts are a viable career option for aspiring students; Arts professionals in South Dakota are economic contributors and community leaders, making our state thrive.
 - **Year 2:** We will inform policymakers and stakeholders on effective strategies and policy options to reap the benefits of arts education for workforce preparation.
 - **Years 1-3:** We will continue to develop our partnership and interaction with the Cheyenne River Youth Project to help them enhance and sustain their arts education programming, and build a relationship with the Cheyenne Eagle Butte School District for the same purposes. This collaboration will lead to more equitable access to grants and services for people on the Cheyenne Indian Reservation and provide new opportunities for the youth there to experience the arts and have their voices heard.

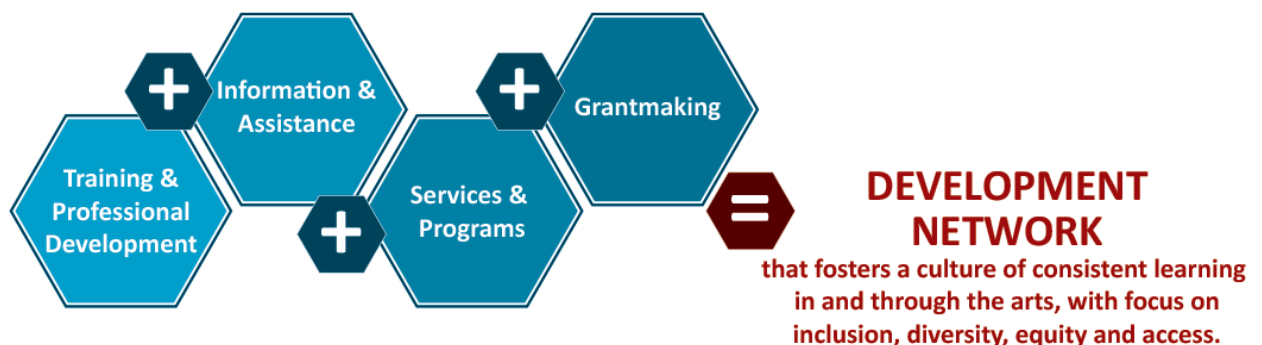


Learn, Goal 3:

Impact vision: The arts community in South Dakota will become a resource for individuals and organizations in our region to seek assistance in professional training, capacity building, and issues of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, as well as culturally responsive evaluation.

Goal 3: Professional Development: Provide and support continuing professional development opportunities for artists, arts specialists, and arts leaders throughout South Dakota.

- Throughout our process for gathering public input and feedback, we frequently heard requests for more professional development opportunities for artists and arts leaders. These needs for professional development require delivery in a variety of ways. To accomplish this goal;
 - **Year 1:** We will partner with Arts South Dakota to program and host a statewide arts conference in May 2018, keeping in mind the learning topics mentioned in our public input sessions, and reaching out to the arts community to seek further guidance on their learning needs for the conference.
 - **Year 2:** We will commit to a continued partnership with Arts Midwest and the state agencies of North Dakota and Iowa to provide the ArtsLab development and capacity building training for arts organizations
 - **Year 3:** Capitalizing on the expertise gained from the ArtsLab program, as well as that of other arts leaders across our state, we will work to establish and support a PD Network serving our state and/or region. This network will include a listing of arts professionals who can help increase our capacity to provide training and technical assistance to arts organizations.
 - **Years 1-3:** We will continuously seek new and innovative ways to connect with constituents to provide them professional development opportunities, including using technology, holding events in multiple locations and multiple formats, and providing grant funds to help arts professionals attend professional development options of their choosing.



Connect

South Dakota is a large state geographically, while our population is among the smallest in the nation. Within the borders of our state lie the reservation lands of nine tribes of the Great Sioux Nation, each with its own identity. While this makes for a unique cultural experience, it also results in barriers between our state arts agency and our constituents. Through our 2018-2020 strategic plan, we will strive to break down these barriers through adaptive communication strategies, which we will track to determine efficacy.

We also recognize the increasing need for our staff to consistently reach out and offer personal assistance to constituents. We believe that the convenience of the technological age has had an adverse effect on the personal connections between constituents and our agency. We intend to increase human interaction in the arts community to improve relations.

As an agency with a small staff in a large state, we have always relied on partnerships to carry out our work. Demand for the work we do is growing, as is our constituency, so these partnerships become more important. We will work to strategically engage new partners and improve relationships with existing ones so our work can meet the needs of more people throughout South Dakota.

What will we do?

Goals:

- 1) Resources and Information: Develop regular, ongoing methods for artists, organizations, and communities to access information and resources to support their needs in the arts.
- 2) Outreach and Technical Assistance: Increase efforts to include the voices of all South Dakotans and access to staff or other professionals to assist in individual and community efforts to advance the arts.
- 3) Cooperation: Advance shared goals through partnerships with other state agencies, private entities, and the business community.

How will we do it?

Approach/Methods:

Connect, Goal 1:

Impact vision: South Dakotans will be aware of the mission and initiatives of the South Dakota Arts Council. They will be able to easily find information about the work we do and become connected to our agency and partner organizations, and feel a true sense of belonging to the arts community as a whole.

Goal 1: Resources and Information: Enhance regular, ongoing methods for artists, organizations, and communities to access information and resources to support their needs in the arts.

- One of the concerns we heard most frequently throughout our public input process was that people feel disconnected from the state agency and from each other. There is an urgent need to find solutions to this problem so the arts community knows they are supported by state government, which in turn, will have a positive impact on how local governments show support. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** We will continue to evolve our programs and communication strategies to reach more South Dakotans more frequently. We will employ a variety of communication methods, including social media, traditional media and in-person consultations to help constituents feel they have access to staff and will receive fair and equitable treatment from our state arts agency and partner agencies.
 - **Year 2:** We will work to improve visibility and simplicity of use for constituents looking for directories, opportunities, and events, statewide.
 - **Year 3:** We will launch a new website that is more user-friendly and accessible to people of all abilities, while continuing access improvements on our current site until the launch of the new one.



**UNIFIED ARTS
COMMUNITY**

**fostered by inclusive and supportive
policy and practice at our state arts agency.**

Connect, Goal 2:

Impact vision: Our constituents will be more equitably represented throughout the structure of our state arts agency, leading to adjustments of policy and practice that better assist the underserved sectors of the constituency. We will become more responsive to the needs of the underserved communities, engaging in methods of culturally responsive evaluation and design of programs and services.

Goal 2: Outreach and Technical Assistance: Increase efforts to include the voices of all South Dakotans and improve access to staff or other professionals to assist in individual and community efforts to advance the arts.

- Our relationships with and inclusion of the underserved communities in our state need to be strengthened. A need for focus and attention on Indigenous people, people of color, the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, people living in poverty, people in extremely rural areas, and young people is prevalent. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** We will adjust current policies, procedures and practices to attain more diverse representation across grant review panels and our board to address issues of inequity.
 - **Year 2:** We will work with Arts South Dakota and other possible partners on the formation of an Arts Ambassadors Network, made up of constituents and other representatives who have relevant connections to communities and the South Dakota Arts Council to help with issues of capacity, inclusion, and outreach.
 - **Years 2-3:** We will adapt the grant application process to respond to the concerns and needs of our constituents in the Tribal community, exploring multiple options for grant application submission, including hi- and lo-tech and adjusting our review process accordingly.



Connect, Goal 3:

Impact vision: It will be widely known that the arts build bridges in society and are the most effective resource for developing a shared vision and realistic plan to carry out that vision. The South Dakota Arts Council, artists and arts organizations will be among the first points of contact for groups looking to accomplish goals and solve problems through the collective impact model.

Goal 3: Collaboration: Advance shared goals through partnerships with other state agencies, private entities, and the business community.

- Working collaboratively toward a shared vision is the most effective way our agency can connect with a wider constituency and audience. It increases our capacity and bolsters the arts as a necessary component to community livability. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** Through an already established partnership with our Lt. Governor's Office, the Michael J Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home, and Arts South Dakota, we will engage teaching artists, arts administrators, Veterans Home staff and others with relevant experience to help design and implement a comprehensive artist-in-residence program at our State Veterans Home, including the local school district and community.
 - **Year 2:** We will work with arts organizations to design and develop a system of regional partnerships representing the arts community. The regional system will help organize events and distribute information at the regional level to assist us with maintaining regular communication with artists and arts organizations.
 - **Years 1-3:** Working with the Department of Tourism and Governor's Office, we will explore ways to increase staff capacity at the South Dakota Arts Council to better assist constituents.
 - **Continuous:** We will work to strategically engage partners, current and new, to help us broaden our reach and influence across South Dakota by including the arts as part of the solution to shared challenges and goals.



Progress

The arts are a way of life in South Dakota. They make our communities vibrant and drive the tourism industry. Throughout the past few years, we've seen the arts take the lead in successful community revitalization efforts across our state. As more towns and cities attempt to take on the challenges of growth, change, and revitalization, we strive to help them define their sense of identity as a community. The arts are the most powerful way to include all voices and work toward meaningful place-making without oppressing people with lesser degrees of privilege.

As this purposeful work in development, education, and connection continues, it's important that we communicate the value in a variety of ways to a variety of audiences. Crafting an effective message will result in buy-in from multiple stakeholders who can use their influence to help us progress.

What will we do?

Goals:

- 1) Community Development: Foster strong communities locally and statewide with a sense of place that is creative and beneficial to all.
- 2) The Essential Arts: Clearly and effectively communicate the importance of the arts in education, community livability, and the economy to policy-makers and stakeholders throughout South Dakota.

How will we do it?

Approach/Methods:

Progress, Goal 1:

Impact vision: South Dakota communities will see the arts and culture sector as a catalyst for economic vitality and quality of life and engage in inclusive, intentioned place-making efforts that result in equitable positive outcomes for all.

Goal 1: Community Development: Foster strong communities locally and statewide with a sense of place that is creative and beneficial to all.

- We know that our communities are stronger through the arts, and that small towns in South Dakota are struggling with loss of businesses, under-served schools, and few resources to address these issues. However, we see great potential for rural communities to come together to address these issues through creative means. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Years 1-3:** We will continue current work with three communities to help them identify their own strengths and opportunities to develop effective policies and partnerships to enhance and grow through the arts.
 - **Years 1-3:** We will build relationships and partnerships on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to cooperate with local communities on development of an innovative pilot program for a traditional arts market to draw tourists and authentic Native American art buyers to the community for support.



Progress, Goal 2:

Impact vision: Meaningful partnerships, programs, and services will demonstrate the fundamental need humans have for the arts from childhood to old age and convince lawmakers that access to the arts is a civil right, and therefore, public funding for the arts is necessary and appropriate.

Goal 2: The Essential Arts: Clearly and effectively communicate the importance of the arts in education, community livability, and the economy to policy-makers and stakeholders throughout South Dakota.

- Widespread public awareness about the importance of the arts in our state is vital to our agency's mission and goals and necessary for artists and arts organizations to thrive in vibrant communities. To accomplish this goal:
 - **Year 1:** We will continue to strengthen our partnership with Arts South Dakota, which is mutually beneficial to both agencies. This partnership includes collaborative efforts on public awareness, arts education, strategic planning, and other meaningful endeavors, such as the ArtsCorr residency and arts integration program being piloted at Sequel Transition Academy for incarcerated youth and our new Arts initiative at the State Veterans Home.
 - **Year 1:** Engaging with teaching artists, arts administrators, and care facility staff, we will pilot the Art for Life project in an elder-care facility in South Dakota, with the intention of expanding the program in the future. In partnership with the North Dakota Council on the Arts, where the program was designed, we will seek to improve the emotional and physical health and wellness of South Dakota's aging population through intensive art and artist interaction.
 - **Year 2:** We will work to strengthen our partnership with the Department of Tourism, Tribal Relations, and other government agencies to engage them to help share success stories of the arts in South Dakota.
 - **Years 1-3:** We will capitalize on our current and developing work to better communicate the deep significance the arts have on people and communities across South Dakota. Increased efforts to share data and personal impact stories through a variety of platforms will result in strong advocacy for the need to invest in public arts funding.



Evaluation:

The South Dakota Arts Council will evaluate progress made on goals in a variety of ways, while constantly keeping in mind the principles of Culturally Responsive Evaluation, which will help us realize our overarching equity goal:

1. Learn the culture and environment.
2. Engage the people.
3. Develop culturally relevant evaluation design and tools.
4. Conduct the evaluation with the community.
5. Disseminate and advocate – market lessons learned to foster social justice and a thriving community.

Grant reports. We have three main methods of evaluating our grant programs, including data-collection, self-evaluation, and observation.

The first is the grant evaluation completed by the grantee. Every grantee must complete the grant evaluation form, which reports to us the population reached through the grant funds, the dollars spent to complete the grant projects or programs, and the grantee's self-evaluation on the effectiveness of projects and programs associated with the grant funds.

On-site evaluations are completed by SDAC staff and board members attending SDAC-sponsored events. The evaluations ask for numbers of participants and for evaluators to rate the outcomes of the events as they relate to the Council's long-term goals.

Our Annual Report contains a list of all of our grants awarded. They are broken down by city, which provides us with a picture of the reach of SDAC funding across the state. This is an effective evaluation tool to work on expanding and maintaining connections in South Dakota Communities.

Conversations. In South Dakota, we value the conversations we have with our constituents and use these as a method for evaluating our programs and services in three major ways.

Our Regional Arts meetings and Arts Road Trips are held each spring, varying in location, but hitting all regions of the state. The latest regional meetings were held in nine communities across the state. During regional meetings, we ask attendees for feedback on what we've been doing and input on what we should do in the future. We also share information with constituents during these meetings.

During our Statewide Arts Conference, in cooperation with Arts South Dakota, we invite artists, staff and volunteers from arts organizations, educators, administrators, legislators and public officials to join us to

hold important conversations about the role of the SDAC and how we can evolve to help meet the needs of our constituents.

In preparation for our strategic planning, every three years we send out a constituent survey rating the relevance and efficacy of work the SDAC has done. We also gather further input as to what our constituents would like to see us do in the future.

Connections. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of our communications, we track the numbers of people who are reached via our various platforms.

Numbers are gathered at Regional Arts Meetings, the Arts Education Institute, Statewide Arts Conference, the Governor's Awards in the Arts, and other meetings and events

Electronic media platforms include social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In groups), and our online version of Arts Alive, a triannual publication.

We count the reach of broadcasts on news programs and our public broadcasting stations; and track readers reached by printed publications including news releases, Arts Alive, and public information brochures and reports.

We also use analytics and geolocation services to review our website view statistics.

Data. Outside of our own data collection, we use information from other agencies and organizations to help us learn about our impact in the state.

Data from the state Department of Education that communicates school demographics is available and will be used to evaluate progress on arts education goals.

We will also use data from Americans for the Arts including information about creative industries report and the economic impact study. In 2011, the SDAC partnered with AFTA to conduct the Arts in Economic Prosperity study. Now we can use those numbers in comparison with current ones for tracking and evaluation purposes.

Measurement. Throughout the next three fiscal years, we will track progress of our strategic planning goals. We have made a point to include several specific methods and tactics for achieving these goals, and as we develop our work plan, we will have a clear picture of the steps needed to meet deadlines and advance our work.

Our Board:

Lynne Byrne, Sioux Falls, Chairman

Mary Bordeaux, Rapid City, Vice Chairman

Lynda Clark Adelstein, Rapid City, Treasurer

Linda Anderson, Rapid City, Secretary

Jane Rasmussen, Sisseton

Brian Bonde, Sioux Falls

James L. Walker, Bath

Laura Diddle, Brookings

Deanna Lien, Rapid City

Andrew Kightlinger, Pierre

Mary Haug, Brookings

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