

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

Where Theatre Begins

Map's staff and the artists we serve live and work on Treaty One Territory and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We are grateful to the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples for their traditional stewardship of this land. We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Mandate

MAP is a non-profit service organization that supports Manitoba artists in the creation and development of new work for theatre and live performance.

Vision

To be a home for Manitoba playwrights and storytellers, and to nurture, support, develop, and champion their creations

Values

- Stories have the power to change the world
- New plays sustain our art form
- We honour the artist
- One-size-fits-one
- All voices deserve to be heard

Goals

- Provide a home for our region's playwrights and storytellers
- Serve the full diversity of our sector
- Increase our regional and national profile and collaborations
- Expand provincial representation and participation
- Define MAP membership

Strategies

1. Enhance services to historically marginalized and underserved communities

Remove barriers and work towards equitable and culturally competent services for all by addressing a lack of diversity in MAP's leadership and dramaturgical team, and by moving away from Eurocentric creation methodologies towards creation models devised and led by the communities being served.

2. Increase and diversify revenues

Address financial constraints towards strengthening MAP's ability to expand on our present program and service portfolio, and to sustain operations in an evolving public funding sector.

3. Develop and implement a plan to enhance organizational profile

Amplify MAP's profile within the theatre sector and community at large; to increase our visibility and engagement with the full diversity of our province's playwrights and storytellers, and to enhance our ability to expand and diversify support for the organization.

4. Create an HR plan for organizational sustainability

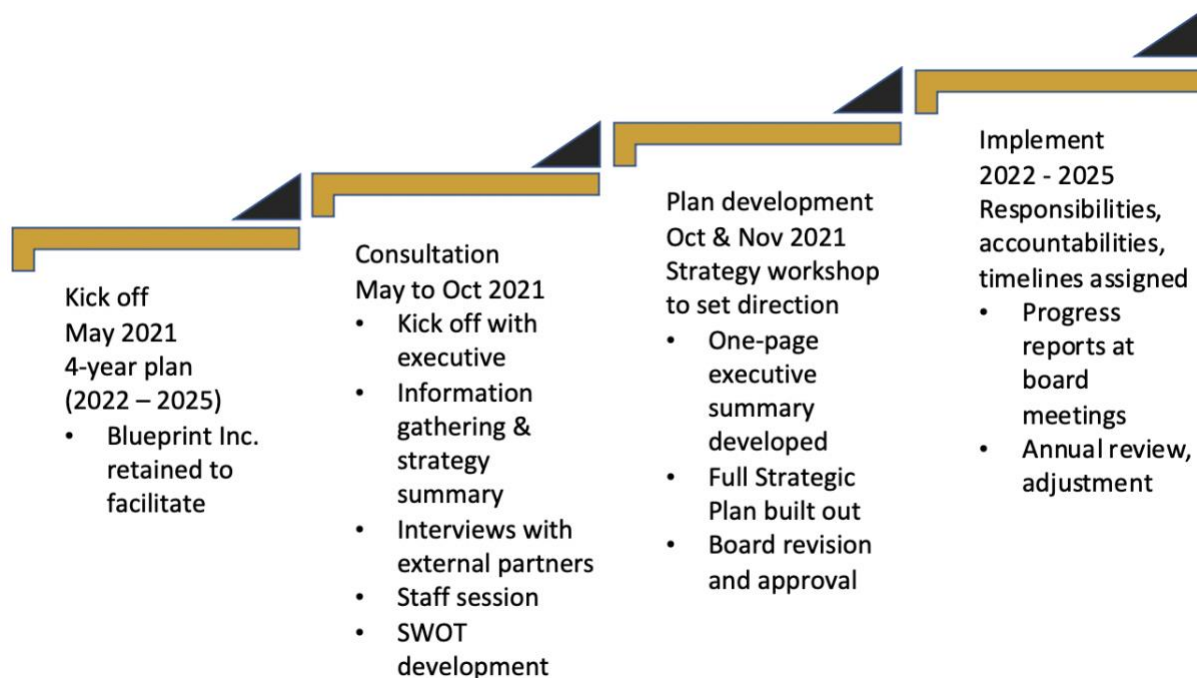
Explore new staffing structures and membership models to address organizational capacity, towards redistributing and increasing the human resources required to sustain and expand on the organization's vision and mandate.

1.0 Background

Process

This 4-year strategic plan has been developed through consultation with MAP members and colleagues, staff, the board of directors, and key external stakeholders with the goal to ensure it delivers a fulsome approach to defining and successfully meeting the needs of the organization and their service to Manitoba's theatre community.

Over several months, the following process steps were taken:



Inputs

- WAC Core Funding application
- MAC 2021-2022 Grant renewal report
- CCA Core Funding 2020-2024 application
- MAP Strategic Plan 2015-2018
- MAC Strategic Priorities
- APN national playwrights' survey
- MAP Dramaturgically Speaking seminar Apr 2021 Executive Summary
- Prep survey to Strategy Planning team regarding expectations for the process
- Board session feedback

2.0 SWOT Analysis – The process of creating a successful SWOT illustrated the balance within MAP. Each element uncovered is connected to the Goals and Strategic direction implemented for action.

<p>Strengths –</p> <p>Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director with a breadth and depth of skill set & experience, work ethic, artistic vision, and valuable connections to the National network. • Inclusive representation and relationships with the region’s senior IBPOC theatre artists, LGBTQ artists, and artists living with disabilities. • Digital renaissance innovation leader. • Dedicated, skilled, and committed Board Members and staff. <p>Brand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong brand recognition and sense of ownership by membership and community. • Excellent relationship with Funders and sector organizations. (Winnipeg Foundation and our 3 primary funders WAC, MAC, CCA, established theatres and festivals, and their ADs, the University of Wpg. Theatre Dept.) <p>Financial Stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances annually reviewed; stable and balanced budget, sound administrative practices. • Well-developed physical assets at affordable rates. 	<p>Weaknesses –</p> <p>Succession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin and artistic vision are ED centralized • MAC board succession plan required <p>Visibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited visibility & viability amongst younger & emerging theatre artists, particularly IBPOC • Diversity in the ‘public’ face of MAP required • IBPOC dramaturgs required • Credit for the work MAP supports <p>Innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of digital footprint particularly on youth focused platforms • Membership commitment requires clear definition • Revenue diversity/increase in gross revenue required • Lack of fundraising and sponsorship expertise
<p>Opportunities –</p> <p>Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pandemic! The theatre community is shook-up and porous, and open to change – eager and hungry for collaboration and reinvention. • As a service organization, not competing directly with theatres for grants. <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre community goals are aligned including our collective survival, social justice movement, digital exploration, climate change, etc • MAP’s physical assets available to community at affordable rates 	<p>Threats –</p> <p>Instability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pandemic! HUGE unknowns for sector recovery. • Current smaller theatre organization instability. • Long term viability of Artspace Building. • Public funding for the arts threatened, particularly on the municipal level. <p>Shifting Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre artists pivoting to other mediums. • Demand for small cast-size plays. • Theatres developing plays in-house. Who is MAP developing plays for? • Prioritization of digital arts & technology by some public funders.

3.0 2022– 2025 Strategic Plan

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Core Values & Beliefs

Stories have the power to change the world

- Theatre is an art form that entertains, educates, startles, and transforms society.

New plays sustain our art form

- The creation of new plays is crucial to the existence of a living theatre.

We honour the artist

- The development of new work thrives in a safe environment that supports and encourages creative freedom and exploration.

One-size-fits-one

- Each storyteller is an individual, with a unique vision, voice, and process.

All voices deserve to be heard

- MAP champions equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in all their forms, and is committed to the process of reconciliation.

Goals

- *Provide a home for our region's playwrights and storytellers*

Dismantling the perception of MAP as an organization or institution and rebuilding as a welcoming 'home' is essential to effectively serve the full breadth of our region's playwrights and storytellers. A creative artist needs to trust that they will be welcomed at MAP as individuals with a unique vision, voice, and process, and be provided with a safe environment to support their creative freedom and exploration.

- *Serve the full diversity of our sector*

Although progress has been made over the last few years, MAP recognizes that the majority of our membership is still of European descent, and our services are most often used by straight, white, cisgender, able-bodied settlers working within a Euro-centric artistic practice. Each of

those metrics must be challenged, broadened, and deepened in order to serve the full diversity of our sector and an ever-evolving art form.

- *Increase our regional and national profile and collaborations*

As a behind-the-scenes service organization often working independently, MAP's lack of visibility and collaboration in the theatre and business sectors and the region at large hinders our ability to attract the artists we want to serve, and our ability to increase and diversify our revenues through private and public funding.

- *Expand provincial representation and participation*

MAP recognizes that our urban-centric program and service portfolio denies opportunities to our rural artists and in particular our emerging and Indigenous artists, many of whom live outside of Winnipeg. We need to earn the "Manitoba" in our name, and our core value that all voices deserve to be heard, by serving our entire region.

- *Clarify and redefine MAP membership*

A fundamental and overdue investigation is required to begin to dismantle and rebuild MAP's service portfolio and to address organizational capacity, beginning with our present membership model which biases enthusiasm over the quality of the work. A tiered membership model should be investigated (supporter, artist, company, for example) as well as redefining our obligations to any given member.

Strategies

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4. Create an HR plan for organizational sustainability

Explore new staffing structures and membership models to address organizational capacity, towards redistributing and increasing the human resources required to sustain and expand on the company's vision and mandate.

Plan & Measures of Success

Strategy 1: Enhance services to historically marginalized and underserved communities

Goals related to this strategy:

- Provide a home for our region's playwrights and storytellers
- Serve the full diversity of our sector
- Expand provincial representation and participation

Key benchmarks to define success:

- Annual increase in representation from underserved communities in our membership (quantifiable, # and %)
- Annual increase in representation from underserved communities in the artists we serve (quantifiable, # and %)
- Annual increase in number of MAP Dramaturgs coming from historically marginalized communities (quantifiable)

As an artistically anchored strategy, the quality of MAP's services is as important as the quantitatively measured benchmarks. Success will be measured by the depth of engagement with individual artists from our underserved communities, our championing of those artists' work, their willingness to recommend our services to their peers and the emerging artists within their communities, and MAP's ability to provide culturally competent dramaturgical support to all of our sector's diverse communities.

Strategy 2: Increase and diversify revenues

Goals related to this strategy:

- Increase our regional and national profile and collaborations
- Expand provincial representation and participation

Key benchmarks to define success:

- Gross revenue increase of 20 to 25 % by 2025.
- Revenues from public funding decreased from approx. 80% to 70% of total revenues by 2025.
- Decrease Manitoba Arts Council funding to 30% or less of total revenues by 2025.

The success of this strategy is essential to the success of Strategy # 4, organizational sustainability. In that respect, the success of Strategy #4 is a benchmark for Strategy # 2.

Strategy 3: Develop and implement a plan to enhance organizational profile

Goals related to this strategy:

- Increase our regional and national profile and collaborations
- Expand provincial representation and participation

Key benchmarks to define success:

- Annual increase and diversification in digital footprint across all platforms (# of followers and engagements, a younger demographic, and engagement outside of the theatre sector)
- Annual increase and diversification in the number of artistic and business engagements
- Annual increase in membership

- Annual increase in the number and/or quality (scope and impact) of collaborations with theatres and other play development centres.

Strategy # 1, enhanced services to our underserved communities, and Strategy # 2, an increase and diversification of revenues, will be achieved in synergy with this strategy. In that respect, the success of Strategies # 1 and 2 are benchmarks for Strategy # 3.

Strategy 4: Create an HR plan for organizational sustainability

Goals related to this strategy:

- Increase our regional and national profile and collaborations
- Expand provincial representation and participation
- Define MAP membership

Key benchmarks to define success:

- A redefined and restructured membership model by 2023.
- A restructured leadership and staffing model by 2024.
- A revitalized Board of Directors by 2024.

All elements of this Strategic Plan require human resources that challenge MAP’s present organizational capacity. In that respect, the success of any element of this Plan – Vision, Mandate, Goals, and Strategies - is a benchmark for Strategy # 4.

4.0 Putting this document to work

A commitment to the following implementation measures will ensure this strategic plan is an effective and responsive guide for the organization’s decision-making and actions over the next 4 years.

Embracing these best practices will support internal awareness, understanding and buy-in of the plan’s strategies and goals, in turn increasing the likelihood that the organization will successfully achieve the objectives set out in this document.

The organization is committed to these best practices for implementation of the strategic plan:

- A commitment to report on ongoing progress. Discuss the practical ways that the team can play a meaningful role in helping the organization meet its goals.
- Establishing internal benchmarks and responsibilities: For each strategy identified in the plan, a set of internal steps will need to be identified as part of annual planning to ensure progress is achieved. The Board of Directors and key staff will be engaged in action planning and have a clear understanding about what their role is with respect to implementation, accountability for achieving targets, and the development of internal timelines.
- Reporting on progress and documenting outcomes: A reporting schedule should be set to keep the Board of Directors apprised of implementation progress at regular intervals.

- Ongoing stakeholder engagement; Stakeholders will also be kept apprised of progress and implementation. The organization will also ensure that stakeholders are given an opportunity to continue to offer input and feedback for the organization's future consideration.
- Annual review: The organization will undertake a structured annual review of its progress, the outcome of which will help inform the development of the following year's action plan, and shifts in strategy that may be required.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Dramaturgically Speaking Seminar, April 2021, Executive Summary

Appendix 2 – Strategic Plan Miro Board Output snapshots

Respectfully submitted by Brian Drader (Executive Director) and MAP's Board of Directors; Ann Hodges (President), Cherry Karpyshin (Treasurer), Melinda Tallin (Secretary), and members at large Karen Clavelle, Chad Heath, Sam Nguyen, and Ian Ross.

MAP acknowledges and thanks Pam Grahame and Blueprint Strategic Consulting Services Inc. for their facilitation and leadership through the strategic planning process.

MAP Dramaturgically Speaking Seminar, Thursday April 22nd, 2021

Executive Summary

Context –

Over 20 of MAP's ad hoc team of dramaturgs (dramaturgs who have been development through MAP's programs and/or who have worked for MAP in the last 4 years) gathered for a free-ranging discussion on the state of theatre coming out of the pandemic and the recent social justice movement; where we are, where we're heading, and how MAP can best serve our community moving forward. MAP's ad hoc team of dramaturgs also represent many of our established and emerging playwrights, and community leaders.

Hypothesis -

MAP should;

Remain a dramaturgically-led service organization.

Retain a regional mandate. National and International scope, but with a core mandate to serve our regional storytellers.

Questions -

How does a play and playwright and new theater creation development center best serve our regional community now and in the context of our best guesses as to where we're heading?

How are we doing? How are the playwrights doing? How are the dramaturgs doing?

Envision where we think theater will be two years from now. We are in spring 2023. What does it look like? Where do we think we're heading? What do we want it to be? How can MAP best position itself to lead and serve going into this imaged future?

Offers & observations on our imagined future –

- A trend towards collaboration between different types of performing arts.
- Digital hybrid models, merging of digital and live forms. Storytellers using more digital and technological storytelling vocabularies in the plays themselves.
- Audiences growing beyond regional, to national & international, with the availability of digital work.
- Theatres moving away from being represented by or attached to the buildings that house them. Moving away from 'big' theatres, big productions. An emphasis on smaller cast plays for live performance.
- Less touring, fewer co-productions.

- Developing a new vocabulary to communicate the special nature of coming to a live experience.
- The revolution to decolonize theater and to more fully embrace and support racialized communities and marginalized communities in general.
- A movement towards community engaged work, regionalism.
- Re-examining the economy of how we make a living as storytellers with smaller shows, smaller audiences, work in the digital realm.
- The move towards more self-producing. Riskier work within the context of self-producing smaller scale shows.
- How do we collaborate vs. compete?
- How do we move away from monetization but still make a living?
- What is our relationship to the audience? Devaluing big crowds and establishing deeper connection with small 'c' community? Supporting theatre made by traditionally non-theatre creators?

Possible focus & directions for MAP

- Centering, deepening and broadening dramaturgical dialogue and investigation to embrace a larger portion of our community, towards self-sufficiency (from monetization, from granting bodies, from large scale production and attendance).
- The dramaturgy of process; expanding our understanding past just the engagement with the playwright over a given draft; dramaturgical analysis as an anchor for the evolution of our future theatre practice.
- Mentorship opportunities to shadow a dramaturg for an entire process.
- Cultural competency in dramaturgy, targeting development and growth to ensure representation. Exploring the ethics of dramaturgy and the ethics of collaboration, particularly as they pertain to historically marginalized populations.
- Developing entry level playwriting and storytelling training and possibilities to historically marginalized populations.
- A deepened investment in supporting non text-based narratives.
- Providing training opportunities and support for self-producing.

- Expanding training options beyond just theatre, adapting our storytelling skills to other platforms (film, writing for video games, etc).
- Offering workshops to other fields (businesses, government) that might benefit from an understanding of dramaturgical processes.
- Supporting playwrights towards financial security, with time to write (such as was provided by CERB). How can MAP bolster this? Advocacy? Residency programs?
- Provide opportunities for national and international community and exchange through the other playwriting centres or event programming.
- Provide community, for both playwrights and dramaturgs.
- More events like this one!
- Retaining a balance between being a responsive service organization and moving forward with a vision of what we want theatre to be (serving vs. leading).
- Stay nimble! Don't lose that in over-planning or programming.
- **Key to MAP's future;** a deepening engagement with our emerging theatre artists, particularly those from historically marginalized communities.

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