

DECEMBER 2022

**ART IS WHAT  
MAKES LIFE  
MORE  
INTERESTING  
THAN ART**

2022-2027 Strategic Plan  
Arts Council Windsor & Region

 [WWW.ACWR.NET](http://WWW.ACWR.NET)

 **ARTS COUNCIL  
WINDSOR&REGION**



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# BACKGROUND/PROCESS

In April 2021 the ACWR board and staff initiated the process of revisiting the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan with the aim of addressing the impact of COVID-19 and orienting the organization accordingly. This process offered the opportunity to revise the mission and vision statements, which proved to be vital, but also initiated a series of reflections for possible speculative futures for the organization. As a service-oriented organization, a speculative scenario that was conceived embraced the ACWR as a “collective artwork” in itself, whose ultimate goal was serving the arts community. In June 2022, thanks to a grant received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an external strategic planner consultant, Melinda Munro, was hired to help conclude the process. Munro guided a series of insightful workshops which prompted the organization to reflect about its inner motivations and sources of inspiration. The new strategic plan emerged from the question “why do we do what we do?”, as well as from a series of reflections about the value of art and its place in everyday life<sup>1</sup>. As a result of this process, four strategic directions were identified and respective future scenarios were envisioned. Presently the drafting of the Operational Plan is well underway with full participation of board and staff and will be concluded before the end of the current year.

Dec. 08th, 2022

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1) That “art is what makes life more interesting than art” was an inspirational statement invoked frequently during the meetings. This perspective on the role of art in everyday life comes from the French self-taught artist and poet Robert Filliou, who visited Canada regularly during the 1970s. His presence helped to inspire the creation of networks of collaboration across the country as well as the emergence of the artist-run centres.

## OUR VISION:

To live in a community in which:

- All forms and expressions of art are valued and none are privileged over another;
- Artists and art-workers are valued, respected, and supported; and
- Barriers to art-making are identified and removed to ensure equitable access to resources and supports.

## WE BRING OUR VISION TO LIFE BY:

- **Supporting Artists**
  - Providing a low barrier physical and digital space for exhibitions, performances and other acts of art-making
  - Increasing capacity to make art by creating a network of other artists, arts organizations, audiences, and patrons
  - Supporting artists to grow by providing professional development, mentorship, support for seeking grants and other financial supports, and promoting art making as a way of life
- **Inviting Engagement with Art**
  - Providing opportunities to interact with art through our physical and digital locations
  - Promoting art expressions and events broadly throughout the region
  - Building and nurturing relationships with artists, arts organizations, funders, patrons, audiences and government
- **Advocacy**
  - Advocating for community and institutional change that removes barriers and improves opportunities for artists and arts organizations
  - Amplifying the voices of other advocates for the arts

# OUR VALUES

- **Diversity:** We believe that art making has no barriers based on the personal characteristics of the artist or the form of art
- **Inclusivity:** We invite and embrace community voices
- **Accessibility:** We remove barriers to art making and participation in artistic expression
- **Integrity:** We operate with transparency and adopt high ethical standards in our conduct
- **Excellence:** As ACWR we constantly seek to improve the quality and range of supports we offer to artists and the community

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2022-2027:

- **Expand and diversify the use of ArtSpeak Gallery to be more multi/interdisciplinary and supportive of public art initiatives**

Story of the future: In 2027 artists from different disciplines and backgrounds meet regularly at ArtSpeak Gallery and participate actively in its extending programming, which includes off-site and public art interventions across the city and in the Windsor-Essex region.

- **Expand outreach to newcomers to Canada/Windsor and Region**

Story of the future: Every newcomer artist arriving in Windsor becomes aware of the value of engaging with the ACWR, participating in its unique series of programs facilitating community integration, and utilizing the organization's services tailored specifically to their practice and background.

- **Expand membership base**

Story of the future: In 2027 the ACWR membership package includes an array of benefits and is highly valued by individuals who reside inside and outside city limits and who come from a vast range of artistic practices and cultural backgrounds.

- **Build capacity**

Story of the future: In 2027, ACWR has a strong and sustainable resource base, both in capital and personnel, allowing the organization to continue to thrive as a service provider and advocate for the local and regional arts community.

## **SAMPLE ACTIVITIES THAT WILL BE IN OUR WORK PLANS INCLUDE:**

In 2023 the ACWR will be conducting a series of surveys to invite members, and the public in general, to imagine what they would like to see happening at ArtSpeak Gallery.

Starting in 2023, the ACWR will explore collaboration with other cultural organizations in the region and beyond as a way to increase membership levels beyond the city limits.

In 2023, the ACWR will start exploring the creation of new partnerships with local newcomer supporting agencies to develop a collaborative program geared specifically to newcomer artists.

In 2023, the ACWR will execute a new fundraising plan that aims to increase and diversify its sources of revenue.



## **ABOUT THE ARTS COUNCIL WINDSOR & REGION**

The Arts Council Windsor & Region (ACWR) is a community arts council and art service organization that serves all disciplines of individual artists, arts organizations, and non-arts partners in promoting, developing, and realizing creative activity since 1980. The organization provides the Windsor-Essex Region with valuable services, like ArtSpeak Gallery, Art.Work workshops, the New Voices program, free space arts residencies, individual grant consultation, an in-office resource library, a website which hosts updated resources, a community arts calendar, and the weekly ArtsNotes newsletter.

## **ACWR STAFF**

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Madeline Doornaert  
Administrative and Outreach Coordinator

## **ACWR BOARD**

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