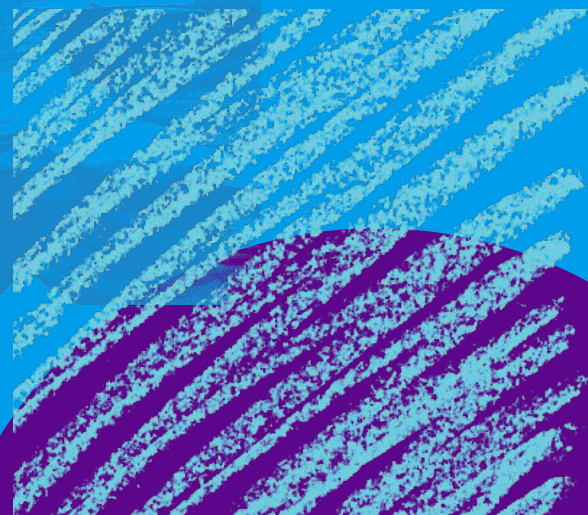




# DisArt 2020: Adaptive Strategic Plan



January 2020

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- A. Organizational Development
- B. DisCourse Consulting
- C. Fundraising & Revenue
- D. Programmatic and Institutional Marketing
- E. Board Development
- F. Artistic and Community Programming

## Background

# Adaptive Strategic Planning

Like many new organizations, DisArt's first years were filled with the excitement and stress of a start-up working to discover who the DisArt community of constituents would ultimately be. Four years later, with unprecedented victories in artistic programming and community impact, DisArt has begun to study the community it has created to discover the bonds that hold it together and help it grow. The adaptive strategic plan will guide DisArt in aligning and amplifying its organizational values to strengthen the bonds of its community and pursue programming, networks and funding sources.

The planning process followed five phases. Reports from the first four phases of the process serve as supplements to this document, the adaptive strategic plan.

Phase one: The DisArt Community

Phase two: The DisArt Organization

Phase three: Insights into Understanding

Phase four: Prototype Creation / Testing

Phase five: Strategic Plan Production

## Background

# Adaptive Strategic Planning

The job of an adaptive strategic plan is to create a values-based approach to developing objectives and tactics that can change or adapt to evolving opportunities and organizational needs. This does not mean an organization can, or should act without accountability, rather the framework of accountability is based on the ability of the organization to act within a predictable and widely understood set of principles. For example, if the organization outpaces predicted growth, how can they look to their strategic plan for guidance in allocating unpredicted resources? While a disciplined and detailed approach to annual objectives is prudent and valuable to any organization, we must assume the work DisArt is doing, as well as the evolving landscape of Disability Culture, will have impact that cannot be fully predicted or prescribed.

Objectives and tactics come from the garden and should be regularly pruned, tended and always freshly served.

Your character, your values, and your mission come from the forest, and should be evergreen.

In both, growth is a given, not a goal.

# DisArt Values

## Identity In Our Values

Diversity & Intersectionality  
Connection  
Self-actualization  
Relationships Over Transactions  
Bias For Action  
Act Against Bias  
Experimentation  
Empathy  
Empowerment  
Flexibility  
Curiosity and Wonder  
Celebration  
Comfort With The Unknown



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# Diversity and Intersectionality



DisArt honors and leans into the complexity of our human lived experience - highlighting the intersectionality of human character as opportunity for empathy, understanding, and sense of belonging.

Diversity brings strength in all areas of the organization.

DisArt champions diverse elements of our society that are excluded and misunderstood due to Disability. Organizationally, DisArt finds strength, relevance and growth by presenting the most poignant, challenging and disruptive elements of Disability culture as well as serving as an educational resource to equip those who share this value.

We are | Defining (re-defining) Diversity to demand the inclusion of those with Disabled life experience.

We are | Defining (re-defining) true Equity work to include recognizing and breaking down Ableism, and true Inclusion to represent Disabled citizens alongside other historically marginalized people.

We are | Defining (re-defining) Disability as an attribute of life lived with creativity and power.

# History of Disruption

Modern Disability Culture and Disability History are disruptive to ableist beliefs, telling a story incongruent with the systematic constructs that disable, discriminate and exclude.

Disruption preempts change, its friction with society gives the heat needed to bend the arc of the moral universe towards justice. Disability Culture, rooted in Disability History, is inherently disruptive to modern society. Expressions of Disability Culture fuel this tension and find hope and potential in disruption.

DisArt is drawn to opportunities to disrupt ableist bias and finds that disruption further amplified where ableism intersects with racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism and other forms of prejudice. DisArt values the history of Disability Culture as a context and guide for future disruption and change.



# Bias For Action, Comfort With The Unknown

Disart values the risks necessary to bring about cultural change through unique and authentic programming.

DisArt acts with urgency to provide a cultural response to the social injustices facing Disabled people and believes these cultural expressions are a core element of the Disability cultural movement.

Cultural movements are organic, potent, and unpredictable. To live successfully as an agent of change within a cultural movement, we value a spirit of curiosity, wonder and reflection in the midst of the unknown.





# Relationships and Connection

DisArt invests in relationships over transactions, building a global network of those who are actively building a world that enjoys the full and equitable participation of Disabled people.

Just as disability transcends race, gender, sexuality, economic status and all other forms of identity, DisArt leverages universal truths within Disability culture to connect and support an international community seeking the full and equitable participation of all Disabled people.

When urgency and action is needed, the relationships DisArt has developed over time

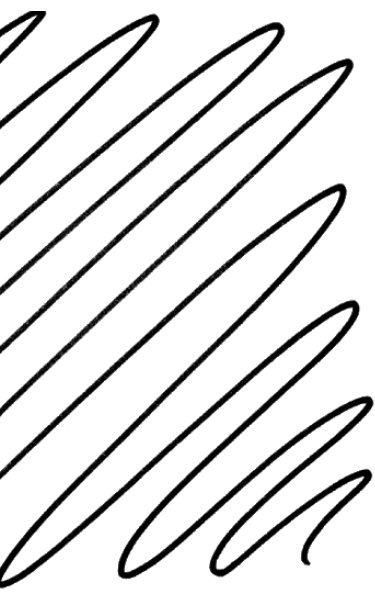
Everything will be done through a relational lens.



Value  
Statements

# Empathy and Self-Actualization

The work of DisArt is rooted in humility, acceptance and celebration of the Disability culture and the Disabled identity - executed always from a stance of curiosity, wonder, intrigue, and choice.



DisArt values the empathy, trust, patience and self-actualization that is rejected by society's ethos of systemic ableism. Through empathy and empowerment, DisArt strategically connects and leverages the power and perspective inherent in Disability culture to other marginalized cultures, broken social systems and outdated societal norms.

Value  
Statements

# Celebrate High Aesthetics, High Performance

We elevate, amplify and celebrate the artistic excellence of Disabled artists.

We observe that more often than not, when disability enters the public sphere, it is under-resourced, un-professional and not expertly executed. Our commitment is to show a different lens on the Disabled life, working at a high level to articulate the intrinsic value of Disabled artistic expression, as well as a professional environment in which those expressions are represented and curated.



# Culture of Freedom and Flexibility

Trust and professional accountability are linked in organizational practices and work culture.

In both the organizational processes as well as the organizational culture, DisArt values permission to re-pace work when bodies or minds require additional time to meet accountabilities and deliverables. Patience and empathy in these times are grounded in trust and acceptance, and a core belief that professional accountability will not be risked by meeting the needs of our bodies and minds.



# Design Principles

## How We Work

CORE | Elevate The Voice, Value And Visibility Of The Disabled Artist

### PROGRAMMING

1. Celebrate The Excellence Of The Disabled Artist.
2. Leverage Intersectionality As A Means To Expand Reach And Influence
3. Target Ableist Stereotypes

### COMMUNITY

4. Root Local, Design Global
5. Define And Lead The Movement

### ORGANIZATION

6. Coach For Achievement
7. Expand Expert Input
8. Fluid And Responsive Workflow
9. People > Transactions



January 2020

Core  
Design  
Principle

# Elevate Disabled Artists



## Elevate The Voice, Value And Visibility Of The Disabled Artist

We Celebrate The Excellence Of The Disabled Artist, in all we do.

The systematic exclusion of Disabled people from society has rendered their cultural and societal contributions invisible. Raising the voice and visibility of this overlooked population requires arts, cultural and educational programming that presents the lived experience and cultural contributions of Disabled people.

In all of our work we aim to

- Represent the diversity within the *Disabled community*.
- Acknowledge the nuances of *Disabled identity*.
- Honor the complexity of *Disability culture*.
- Celebrate the excellence of *the Disabled artist*.

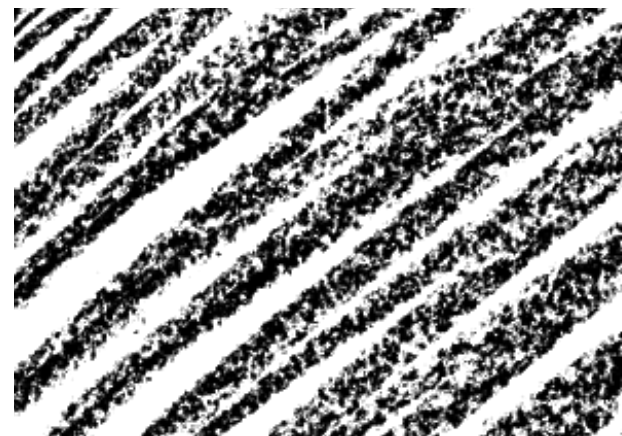
Design  
Principle

# Intersectionality

Leverage Intersectionality As a Means To  
Expand Reach and Influence While  
Amplifying Disruptive Impact

With a focus on the intersectionality of Disability and other cultural identities including gender, sexuality, ethnicity and race, age, and economic status, DisArt discovers programmatic and thought leadership potential.

The commonality witnessed at these intersections creates community collaborations that expand the audience and amplifies disruptive impact that drives awareness and understanding of the unjust exclusion and discrimination that breaks down a fully-inclusive society.





Design  
Principle

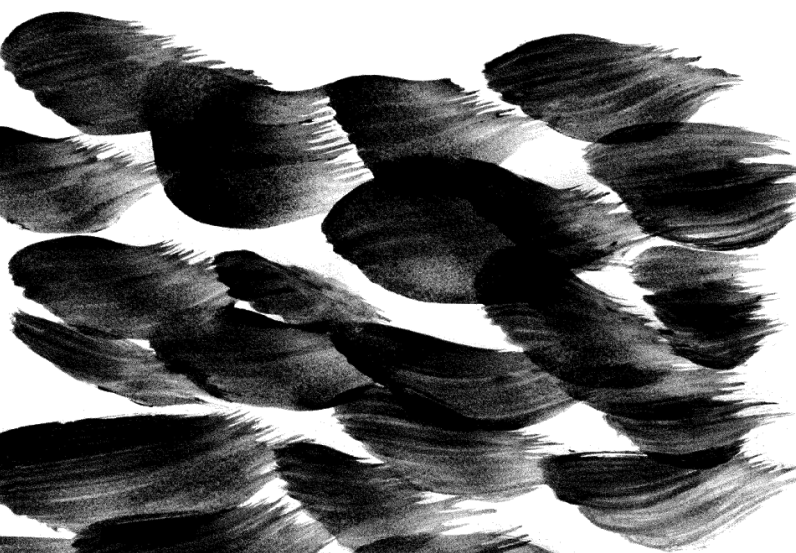
# Target Ableist Stereotypes

We challenge the common implicit and explicit bias against Disabled people

Our work is committed to targeting ableist stereotypes and mindsets.

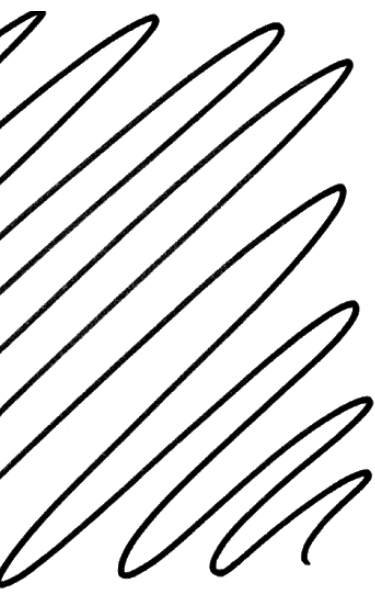
DisArt's programming along side of their growing DisCourse consulting activities challenge the implicit and explicit bias commonly experienced by Disabled people, rendering them invisible and often ignored.

We commit to facilitate respectful debate and provide opportunities for communities to safely reveal and deconstruct societal bias against minority groups. These forums are created directly through hosted panel discussions and educational events; and indirectly through media and public relations strategy that documents and distributes the stories of community progress that further the conversation in the public forum.



# Local to Global

## Root Local, Design Global

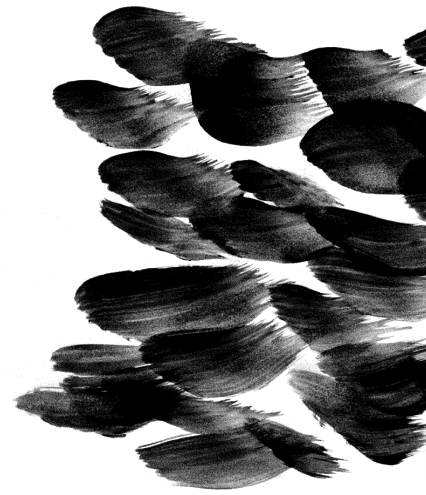


DisArt has developed a strong reputation nationally and internationally as a leader of Disability arts and culture. The research conducted in phase one of the strategic plan development affirmed the impact DisArt has already had outside our home region and an encouragement from funders to explore our work outside West Michigan as a growth strategy.

While the opportunity to continue that growth is attractive, we recognize that our success to date has been largely dependent on the cultural landscape in West Michigan that has afforded us programming, funding and other resource rich partnerships. In compliment to a supportive cultural community, West Michigan also suffers deeply from the societal ills evident in communities that are failing their minority populations. West Michigan provides DisArt with a dire community-wide need for our work as well as adequate resources to do the work within the region.

We will leverage these elements to grow beyond West Michigan by both serving this community with our programming and services as well as testing the relevance and impact our work might have in other communities. As witnessed with Drag Syndrome, DisArt enjoys a support network in West Michigan that allows us to take, measure and understand the risks that come with provocative cultural programming before taking those same risks on a larger scale.

# The Cultural Movement



## Define and Lead the Movement

While the cultural movement to elevate the voice and visibility of Disabled people gains momentum in our country, archaic and dehumanizing systems work to strip the rights from those whose identities do not conform.

DisArt programming questions and challenges existing norms of exclusion and discrimination against Disabled people which sparks a public forum that holds community members accountable for the consequences of their implicit and explicit biases.

DisArt pairs programming with open forums to facilitate respectful debate provide opportunities for communities to safely reveal and deconstruct societal bias against minority groups. These forums are created directly through hosted panel discussions and educational events; and indirectly through media and public relations strategy that documents and distributes the stories of community progress that further the conversation in the public forum.

Design  
Principle

# Coach For Achievement



We leverage our strong, global reputation in the Disabled community, and outside of it.

Known for our expertise and thought leadership on Disability culture, DisArt is living into a new season where we aim to grow our influence, scale our programming and build our platform of offerings as consultants.

Respected by community members, academics, non-profit leaders and artists alike, we have made a marked change in the lives of both Disabled and non-disabled individuals and the communities they share.

A focus on honing our abilities to coach others, and a commitment to our own professional growth through coaching, will support the long term sustainability of the organization that we have so ambitiously created together.

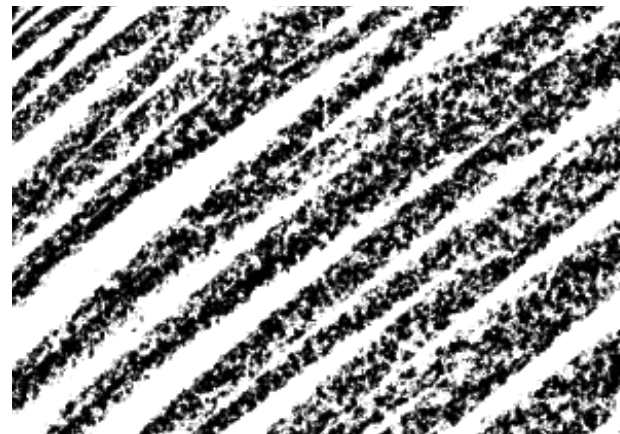
# Expertise

## Expanding Our Expert Input

Building a network of trusted experts and advisors is key for any successful non-profit. DisArt has much to gain by looking for both practical and creative ways to bring in more trusted voices to support the visioning, planning, funding and scaling of our work.

Finding supportive individual with whom we share both vision and values is key to the effectiveness of our delegation, spokespersonship and operational management.

We seek to engage contemporary artists, the contemporary art world, contemporary art media, educational networks, advocacy networks and cultural organizations who work for the full and equitable participation of Disabled people.



Design  
Principle

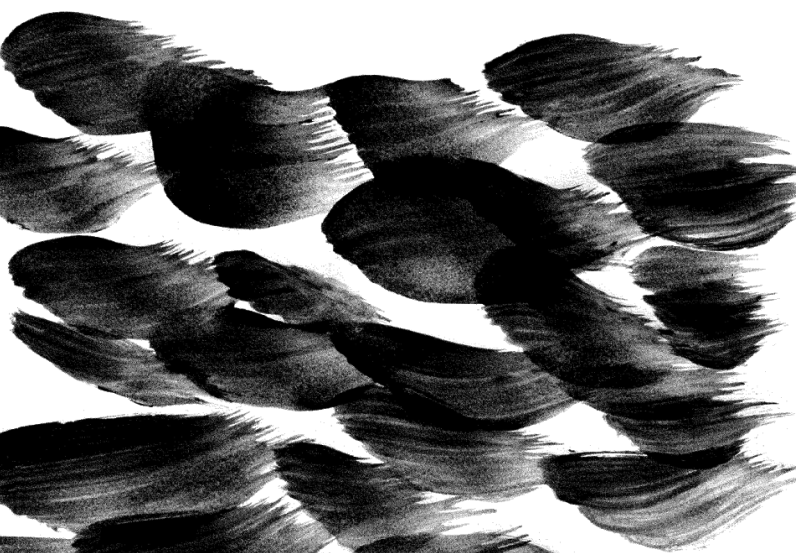
# Fluid And Responsive Workflow

Professional reputation and accountability are not risked for needing to re-pace our work.

Rooted in our value of freedom and flexibility, the culture we create at DisArt is one that gives space and permission to be responsive to the needs of our bodies and minds.

We work together to find creative solutions that do not compromise our commitments nor ask too much of each other. We will consider thoughtfully the bandwidth of team members and re-prioritize work as is needed.

We commit to growing our networks of support and our reliance on the Board of Directors to support our goals and deliverables during times of shifting availability.



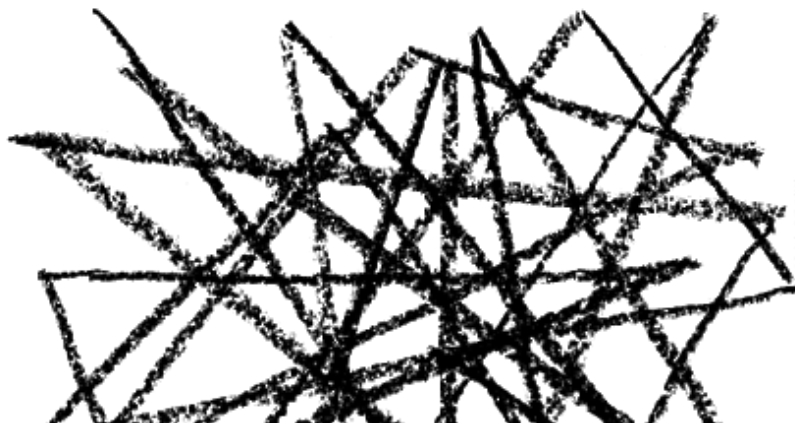
Design  
Principle

# People > Transactions

## Build Relationships That Align With Organizational Values

Relationships built on an alignment of values are the most valuable asset of any organization. As a producer and curator, DisArt's success is dependent on partners, collaborators and artists. In many of these instances, the transactions needed to support the partnership were simple, obvious and easy to ask for as the impetus of the programming was discovered while building a relationship on shared values.

It is important for DisArt to continue to do outreach within our home region, with national organizations, as well as in other communities to discover people and organizations whose values align.





# DisArt Goals

## What We Hold Ourselves Accountable To

Build Awareness, Understanding and Belonging amongst and between Disabled and non-disabled people

Be cultural change agents, informing Disability Culture and addressing Ableist mindsets

Build and strengthen networks - local, national, international, artists, collaborators, funders, BOD

Promote the work of Expert Disabled Artists

Design diverse and experimental programming

Grow consulting activities to compliment solid fundraising plan

Create sustainable organizational practices, policies, procedures and evaluations

Build confidence in operational outcomes, measuring social and cultural impact



January 2020

# Strategic Objectives

## Areas of Impact

- Organizational Development
- DisCourse Consulting
- Fundraising
- Marketing and Impact Management
- Board Development
- Artistic and Community Programming



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# Organization

## The DisArt Organizational Culture Is Built On Achievement And Empathy

### Organizational Development

- Build Consistent Systems: Building systems that increase capacity with minimal maintenance and clear delegation should be approached as an organizational investment that will reward the organization with greater freedom and flexibility.
- Design for Annual Performance Evaluations and Mid Year Review
- Team Communications
- Professional Office Space

### Design Principles in Focus:

- **People > Transactions:** Build Relationships That Align With Organizational Values
- **Expertise:** Expanding our expert input
- **Coach for Achievement:** We leverage our strong, global reputation in the Disabled community, and outside of it.
- **Fluid and Responsive Workflow:** Professional reputation and accountability are not risked for needing to re-pace our work.

Strategic  
Objective

# DisCourse Consulting



Our goal is to offer measurable, organizational impact to an organization's approach to and understanding of disability.

## Consulting and Coaching

- Opportunities for community wide, small business, corporate, non-profit consulting
- Leadership coaching
- Equitable Communications coaching

## Speaking engagements and thought leadership

- Local
- National
- International

## Curatorial Advising

- Accessible Expert Consulting - designing an accessible exhibition, understanding baseline compliance
- Creative Content Collaborators - integrated content beyond the visual and built environment

## Collaborations with other consulting entities

- Develop expert panels
- Co-create content for DisTopia and other outlets

## Design Principles in Focus:

- **Intersectionality:** Leverage Intersectionality As a Means To Expand Reach and Influence While Amplifying Disruptive Impact
- **Target Ableist Stereotypes:** We challenge the common implicit and explicit bias against Disabled people
- **Local to Global:** Root Local, Design Global
- **Coach for Achievement:** We leverage our strong, global reputation in the Disabled community, and outside of it
- **Expertise:** Expanding our expert input

# Fundraising

Growth and scale depend on strengthening relationships with funders and commitment to earned income

## Fundraising

- Integrate fundraising software (CRM) to track giving and relationships
- Fundraising as a priority - not a distraction.
- Year-round Fund/Friend-raising activities
- Build sponsor/donor agreements into all giving relationships
- Focus on big asks over individual giving
- Portfolio to include Grant Monies and In-kind Donations

## Expanding Business Model

- Earned Income of DisCourse Activity
- Corporate sponsors as potential customers

Leverage Board of Directors for networks and annual giving goals

Annual Campaign // Annual Report

## Design Principles in Focus:

- **People > Transactions:** Build Relationships That Align With Organizational Values
- **Expertise:** Expanding our expert input
- **Coach for Achievement:** We leverage our strong, global reputation in the Disabled community, and outside of it.
- **The Cultural Movement:** Define and Lead the Movement





# Marketing

## Programmatic and Institutional Marketing & Social Impact Management

### Earned Media

- Develop expert relationships with local media, then build to regional and national media.

### DisTopia Podcast

- Develop complementary media (Photos, Videos, Soundbites, Teasers)
- Respond quickly to Disability in the media
- Build Networks by Featuring potential partners and artists
- Streamline production to ease the burden of content creation

### Social Media campaigns

- Use strategy outlined in the communication strategy document
- Maintain consistency in voice, post frequency and engagement

### Crisis communications plan

- See communication strategy document

### Impact Marketing

- Share successes to Impact statements

### Social Impact Management

- Logic Model / Model of Change
- Continued ethnographic studies and surveys
- Program Evaluation
- Trends Research - Nonprofit, Social Innovation, Arts Movements

### Design Principles in Focus:

- **Intersectionality:** Leverage Intersectionality As a Means To Expand Reach and Influence While Amplifying Disruptive Impact
- **Target Ableist Stereotypes:** We challenge the common implicit and explicit bias against Disabled people
- **Local to Global:** Root Local, Design Global



Strategic  
Objective

# Board Development

## Leveraging the expertise and networks of your Board of Directors

### Board Development / Engagement

- Recruiting and Board Terms
- Bylaws and Policies
- Accountability and Contribution
- Sub-committee development

### Consistent and Expected Communications

- Board communications and management that are supported by the board itself
- Regular invitations and updates
- Create Disability experts

### Design Principles in Focus:

- **People > Transactions:** Build Relationships That Align With Organizational Values
- **Expertise:** Expanding our expert input
- **Coach for Achievement:** We leverage our strong, global reputation in the Disabled community, and outside of it.
- **The Cultural Movement:** Define and Lead the Movement
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- **Fluid and Responsive Workflow:** Professional reputation and accountability are not risked for needing to re-pace our work.





# Programming



## Everything stems from the Disabled Artist

### Artistic and Community Programming

- Set annual programming and fundraising calendar a minimum of 6 months in advance
- Commitment to diverse and experimental programming that can scale based on revenue and resources
- Build national and international partnerships that will support programming outside West Michigan
- Continue to build East - West Michigan collaborations
- Contributions to Leadership Collective

### Design Principles in Focus:

- **Elevate Disabled Artists:** Elevate The Voice, Value And Visibility Of The Disabled Artist
- **Intersectionality:** Leverage Intersectionality As a Means To Expand Reach and Influence While Amplifying Disruptive Impact
- **Target Ableist Stereotypes:** We challenge the common implicit and explicit bias against Disabled people
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