

fire

Fire

Historical & Cultural Arts Collaborative

Five Year Strategic Plan

Draft 4 // February 27th

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BACKGROUND

VISION

- All people in Kalamazoo can express all facets of their identities authentically and freely without the fear of judgement or oppression.

MISSION

- *Current:* Fire encourages and responds to people's desire to express themselves authentically. Fire believes that social and cultural awareness, generates and sustains social justice.
- *Our Mission Looks Like:*
 - Fire is a youth-driven space for art and justice in the Edison Neighborhood, emphasizing individual leadership development for young people ages 14-21 through social and emotional learning, along with their families and their communities.

History

Fire Historical & Cultural Arts Collaborative (Fire) initiated a strategic planning process in April 2016. The Board created a Strategic Planning Committee after hiring a new Executive Director. A review of the results of Fire's prior strategic plan and an analysis of the primary elements of Fire's current situation helped frame a planning session with members of Fire's Board of Directors in early June. Allison Kennedy, the new Executive Director collected input through creative processes from current staff, youth participants and the WE LIT: Fire Teen Advisory Council. After the planning session, the Strategic Planning committee came together with collected information to find themes that highlight what Fire is now and where Fire would like be in five years, and what capacity and role Fire will have in making its visions a reality in Kalamazoo.

Over the past year, Fire has been in a state of rebirth. In the last six months, Fire hired a new Executive Director, built a larger Board and Board Committees to move Fire forward, as well as created WE LIT: Fire Teen Advisory Council with the support of United Way's Kalamazoo Youth Development Network in order to recenter and remind the organization of its priorities and purpose.

The conversations and ideas generated by all participants is condensed here into a basic strategic roadmap; intended to help organize Fire's five year goals with the clearest pathway for the next year.

OUR VALUES

- Fire values young people as competent resources and part of the decision making body at Fire.
- Fire values radical authenticity and modeling a space where people can be themselves with judgement or shame.
- Fire believes art and justice movements are essential to each other's vision of a more free world.
- Fire values intimacy, meaning our programming is grown through meaningful and deep relationships.
- Fire values artists, especially emerging artists, through compensation, trust, exposure, space, empowerment and community.
- Fire values intergenerational and intersectional creative spaces to grow empathy and emotional capacity.
- People from marginalized identities belong at Fire because their creative practices are seen, amplified and encouraged to grow through risk-taking. Fire knows collective risk-taking can lead to young people to changing this world.

OUR SHARED DEFINITIONS

WHAT & HOW

Expressive Arts are artistic practices that value personal and public risks, engagement and vulnerability.

Justice recognizes the inherent value and dignity of all people. Justice calls for both *personal reflection* and *social change* to ensure that each of us has the right and the opportunity to thrive in our communities, regardless of our identities.¹

Authenticity has been and continues to be the heart of Fire. It means “keeping it real,” and genuine.

Shameless Space is a physical space that encourages everyone to embrace, accept and challenge each other.

Vulnerability means *hurt* or *wound*, and Fire believe these wounds can be claimed and used a source of strength for people through expressive arts encouraged in shameless space.

Youth: Our greatest resources between the ages of 14-21.

Marginalized People/People from the Margins: We believe it is important for us to recognize and name who Fire invests in. People who have been excluded, oppressed, disenfranchised from opportunity, art and equity. Including: working class people, queer people, people of color, gender non-conforming people.

¹ Inspiration borrowed from the Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership.

SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ACTIONABLE, REALISTIC, TIME-BOUND

SMART FIVE YEAR GOALS

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL & FINANCIAL STABILITY

By 2022, Fire operates at an \$90,000 annual budget with an Executive Director, 3 supported staff, 15 volunteers, 9 Board of Directors, and 10 Teen Advisory Council with clear day-to-day procedures to execute multi-year visions.

BUILD YOUTH-DRIVEN SPACE FOR ART & JUSTICE IN EDISON NEIGHBORHOOD

By 2022, Fire will support 30 Kalamazoo youth ages 14-21 to understand their own identities and the world around them through arts & social justice programming that prepares them to own their voices to impact the communities around them to be a more just place. Fire youth and staff reach out to over 1000 youth a year via workshops, performances, and the Kzoo Youth Poetry Slam.

BRIDGE ART & JUSTICE IN KALAMAZOO COMMUNITIES

By 2022, Fire will bridge 20 people directly impacted by injustices to grow in understanding of themselves and injustice through art, and to specific community organizing efforts in Kalamazoo, as well as inspire and resensitize 500 people to injustices through Open Mics, performances & workshops.

The next section of the strategic plan presents the goals that will guide Fire over the next five years. The goal statements relate to 2022 and the measures of success relate to the 2016-17 program year. The measures of success will be adjusted quarterly in the 2017 year by Fire's Board of Directors.

ONE YEAR OBJECTIVES FOR EACH GOAL

Goal: INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL & FINANCIAL STABILITY

By 2022, Fire operates at an \$100,000 annual budget with an Executive Director, 3 supported staff, 15 volunteers, 10 Board of Directors, and 10 member Teen Advisory Council with clear day-to-day procedures to execute multi-year visions.

2016-17 Objective:

By Summer 2017, Fire increases financial stability through fundraising, creating board structure and accountability and builds staff capacity with a consistent structure of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual plans.

	Indicators of Success: 2016-17	Strategies	Resources	Responsible Parties
\$	Meet & follow our proposed 6-month budget for the end of 2016, and propose and approve a 70,000 budget for 2017.	Convene an EOY evaluation of 6-month budget and December adjustments to October-approved 2017 Budget.		Finance Team ED
	Finance Team of ED, Finance Committee Chair, Volunteer Bookkeeper and Board Treasurer all clearly aware of Fire's financial status, and meeting monthly outside of Board meetings to ensure sustainability of Fire	Create Finance Checks & Balances Procedures Maintain relationship with accountant Recruit accountant to be on BOD	Pam Gallina Accountant	Finance Team Chair
	Launch annual End of Year Event raises \$1000 and begin 40 New Donor Relationships	Target ONE community to attract investment in Fire Create EOY Committee	Kzoo Poetry Festival	EOY Committee ED
	Create a plan for financial stability including a fundraising calendar of grant-writing, events, individual donor relationships & a contract model.	Create calendar Apply for 5-10 new grants to foundations Raise \$1500 by EOY	ONEplace	Finance Team ED
B O A R D	Strong Board Transition through December 2016 to January 2017	Recruit 3 new Board members by January 2017 for 1, 2, 3 year terms. Create specific roles and committee <i>missions</i>	ONEplace Board President	ED +BP Board Dev. Committee
	Board members attend/participate in 1 event quarterly.	ED sends invitations		ED + BOD
	Board Maintains Active Committees	Infuse Board committees each with a volunteer Maintain Relationships with Board Chairs Board Committee Chairs report out at Board Meetings		ED + BP BC Chairs
S T A F F	Executive Director sets tone of creativity & professionalism for the organization internally & externally	Finds a longterm mentor by December 2017! Keeps deadlines and communicates openly with the Board, volunteers, Communities partners and funders through Board reports, committee attendance, twice-monthly staff check-ins, monthly e-newsletters, annual mailed letter and accessible annual report.	ONEplace ED PG Leadership Academy	ED
	Support and develop two committed staff members in youth development.	ED creates twice-monthly check-ins and monthly DARS evaluations to gain feedback from Fire employees. ED applies for capacity building funding! Connect with Y.O.U.	Kydnet!	ED

ONE YEAR OBJECTIVES FOR EACH GOAL

Goal: BUILD YOUTH-DRIVEN SPACE FOR ART & JUSTICE IN EDISON NEIGHBORHOOD

By 2022, Fire will support 30 Kalamazoo youth ages 14-21 to understand their own identities and the world around them through arts & social justice programming with social and emotional learning that prepares them to own their voices to impact the communities around them to be a more just place.

Objectives by year:

- 2016-17:** Strengthen WE LIT: Fire Teen Advisory Council TAC to 6 members
Support 15 Youth in art OST programming & 50 Youth participate in Kalamazoo Youth Slam (Michigan Louder than a Bomb)
BEGIN SATURDAY NIGHT PROGRAMMING IN EDISON NEIGHBORHOOD SPRING 2017 w/ Kzoo Youth Poetry Slam
One Youth Join Fire’s Board of Directors
- 2017-18:** Strengthen WE LIT: Fire TAC to 10 members + Support 25 youth in art OST programming.
Support youth in responding to an injustice in the Edison Neighborhood + 2 Youth Serve on Fire’s BOD
- 2018-19:** Strengthen WE LIT: Fire TAC to 10 members + Serve 30 teens/year in OST artistic programming
Support youth in responding to an injustice in the Edison Neighborhood + 3 Youth Serve on Fire’s BOD.

Indicators of Success: 2016-17	Strategies	Resources	Responsible Parties
5-10 Teens producing and performing creative work at Open Mics	Creative Workshops	KPS BGC	ED Youth Advisor TAC
Quarterly Queer-Friendly Lock-Ins	Jan-Mar Lock In, Mar-June Lock In	Kandace Lavendar	ED
WE LIT: Fire TAC Completes 2 Quick Wins or 1 Larger Project	WE LIT: Fire TAC meets twice monthly ED applies for funding to pay teens w/ TAC Cultivate a relationship with local high schools	KYDnet	ED Youth Advisor
Physical Space at Fire is inviting and clear in its purpose.	Plan with WE LIT on how physical space can reflect and operate with a youth aesthetic.		ED Youth Advisor TAC
Teen involvement in programs serves 20 teens	Keep consistent framework Utilize youth to spread the word Visit KPS & PPS	KPS Public Libraries	ED Youth Advisor
WE LIT Propose and Approve Programs of Fire and interview all new hires starting 2017.		KYDnet	ED, YA + TAC
Spring 2016 Saturday Evening Programming for Youth	Filling a gap in Edison Neighborhood.	Boys & Girls Club	ED
CITYWIDE KZOO YOUTH POETRY SLAM! Take 10 youth to Michigan Louder than a Bomb!	Class Visits to K-Central + Norrix Visiting Writing Workshops	Bryan Zocher, Jen Heymoss, High School teachers	ED

ONE YEAR OBJECTIVES FOR EACH GOAL

Goal: BRIDGE ART & JUSTICE IN KALAMAZOO COMMUNITIES

By 2022, Fire will bridge 20 people directly impacted by injustices to grow in understanding of themselves and injustice through art, and to specific community organizing efforts in Kalamazoo, as well as inspire and resensitize 500 people to injustices through Open Mics and Bridging Artist performances & workshops.

Objectives by year:

2016-17: Double “bridge” base by increasing to twice-monthly Open Mics to capacity to and prepare and launch Bridging Artist pilot with one partnership and 3 outreach models.

2017-18: Execute and evaluate Bridging Artist pilot, and adjust to make most effective.

	Indicators of Success: 2016-17	Strategies	Resources	Responsible Parties
ARTIST ACTION	Strong and meaningful relationships with art and justice organizations in Kalamazoo.	One-on-one relationship building Partnership Open Mic for Third Fridays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan United + ISAAC Freedom in Schools? Open Roads? Kzoo County Youth Cabinet? 	Partners	ED Board TAC
	Co-apply & receive a meaningful grant with Michigan United to support work of 2 Bridging Action Artists	By 12/17, meet and brainstorm with MU for grant. Apply to the Criminal Justice Initiative	Michigan United ONEplace Patrisse Cullors	ED Youth Advisor
	Experiment, practice, research and design Bridging Action Artist model	Outreach efforts to KPS twice in 2016-17 school year, and outreach to 3 community organizations working with marginalized communities. Research through site visits to Prison Neighborhood Arts Project in Chicago, Young Chicago Authors, We Charge Genocide.	Young Chicago Authors Youth Speaks	Youth Advisor ED
OPEN	Poetic Justice Open Mic	Explicitly name connection between people sharing their stories with people changing a public narrative through community organizing. Introduce calls to action at Open Mics. Partner with 3 organizations to share space, resources and stories. Create formal avenue for Open Mic Feedback		ED
MICS	First Friday Open Mic & Feature continues to feature and center people most impacted by injustices.	Continue rotating hosts & features for new voices. Create formal avenue for Open Mic Feedback		ED

CURRENT PROGRAMMING

WHAT	WHO	HOW	GOALS
WE LIT: Fire Teen Advisory Council	Youth ages 14-21	Meets Bi-Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds youth confidence, voice, artistry and influence in Edison neighborhood and Kalamazoo communities. • Drives focuses of youth programming at Fire. (Help me out here, Jess... add from Kynet goals?)
Creative Workshops OST	Youth ages 14-21	Meets Twice-Weekly during School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds Social & Emotional learning for teens through artistic exercises. • Teen literacy! Community Building!
First Friday Open Mic & Feature Poetic Justice Open Mics	Youth ages 14-21 Families Intergenerational Communities	Meets Monthly Hosts & Features Intentionally Center Marginalized Voices Open to Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially supports featured emerging artists. • Emotionally & spiritually supports open mic emerging artists and Communities members. • Connects & inspires intergenerational audiences. • Cultivates empathy and listening. • Provides an open-to-the-public non-judgemental space for people to respond to personal and justice issues.
Kzoo Youth Poetry Slam	Youth ages 14-21	Annual Event	

NEXT STEPS & ACCOUNTABILITY

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

- Discontinue youth work with 13 & Unders to focus on quality work with teens.
- Build WE LIT: Fire Teen Advisory Council They are gold!
- City-wide County-Wide Youth Poetry Slam!
- Focus on Gaining Tangible Investment from Youth/Millennials (25 & Under)
- Focus on 3 Close Partnerships in 2017.
- Partnership with Power Organizations to Establish Artist + Justice Collaborations

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOUNTABILITY

- All Executive Director Reports and Board Agenda meetings will follow the format of these objectives.
- The One-Year Objectives will be evaluated quarterly by the Board of Directors in 2017 to better hone our purpose.

BIG QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Do we change or expand the mission in the 2017 year?
- What does “cultural & historical” mean at Fire? Can we do that? Is that in our capacity of our current staff?
- How do we maintain a focus on youth, and simultaneously connect buy-in for Fire’s existing intergenerational communities?
- Are we working to connect artists to justice or justice workers to art? Or both? How do we actually do that in Kalamazoo?

WHO?

- Centering Q/P/TOC in youth development
- Supporting people that have never been supported
- Who Don’t Often Feel Like They Belong
- Marginalized
- Emerging (We are for emerging folks, not for established folks who can go to the KIA) (NO RESPECTABILITY POLITIX)
- Emerging artists catalyze youth connection to their voices?
- Adult programming serves as a way to support Fire, but is not the center of Fire.