

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025
Together We THRIVE



MISSION

Our mission is to improve the economy, vitality and quality of life in Southeastern Connecticut by supporting the arts, cultural and creative community.

VISION

As the voice of the arts and cultural sector, the Cultural Coalition provides core services to connect, strengthen, and advocate for the creative community. The Coalition serves as the liaison between the arts and cultural sector and leadership entities, including municipal, community, business, education, tribal, military, health & wellness, and tourism sectors. The Coalition plays an innovative role fostering partnerships among arts, cultural and creative assets and other regional initiatives seeking to strengthen a sense of place, and attract and retain businesses, residents and visitors.

Arts and culture can create more vibrant, healthy and equitable communities. The Cultural Coalition seeks to authentically represent the region we serve, recognizes the breadth and depth of cultural expression, and ensure that all community members have access to arts and cultural activities. The Cultural Coalition will be a model for improving diversity, equity and inclusion, and provide the tools, resources and motivation to inspire change in our sector and region.

Reflecting the connection between a strong regional economy and a strong, united arts and cultural sector, the Cultural Coalition benefits from annual funding received from the Office of the Arts within Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, and works alongside the state's other eight regional organizations committed to providing sector leadership that advances the creative economy statewide.

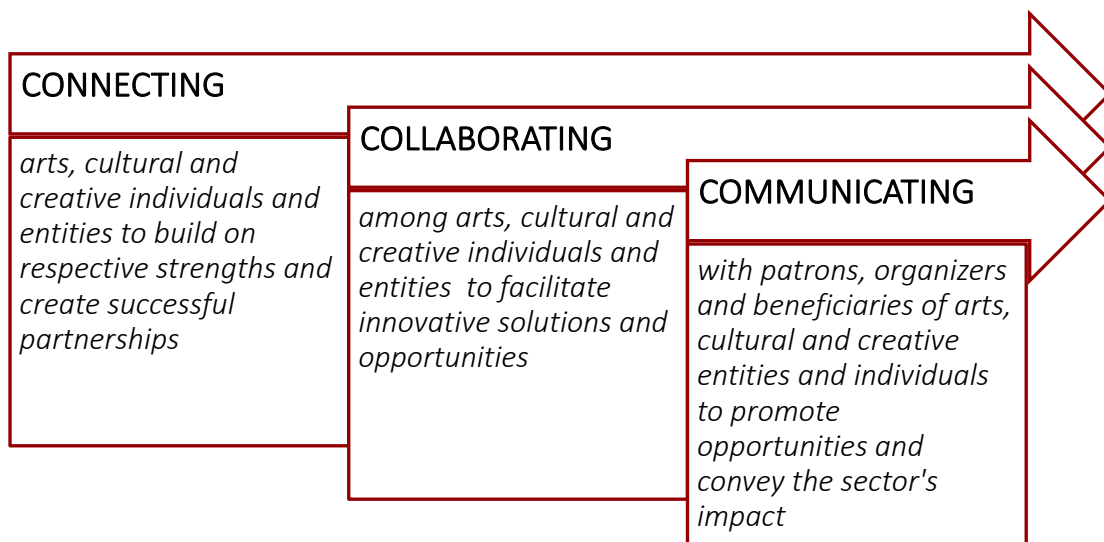
WHO WE SERVE

The Cultural Coalition serves core constituencies:

- Arts and cultural organizations, entities and individuals that make up the creative community,
- Twenty-one (21) Municipalities in New London County;

to benefit Southeastern CT's residents, employees and visitors.

OUR CORE VALUES

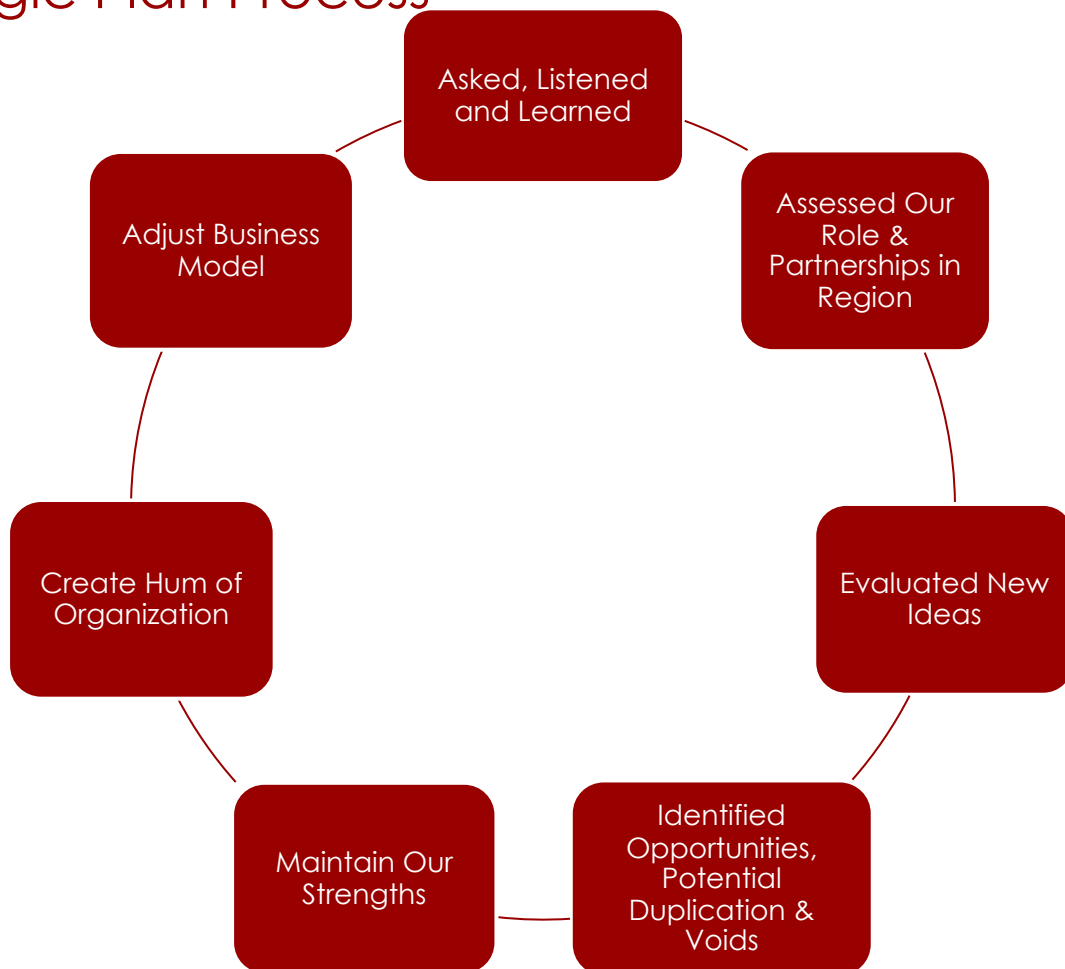


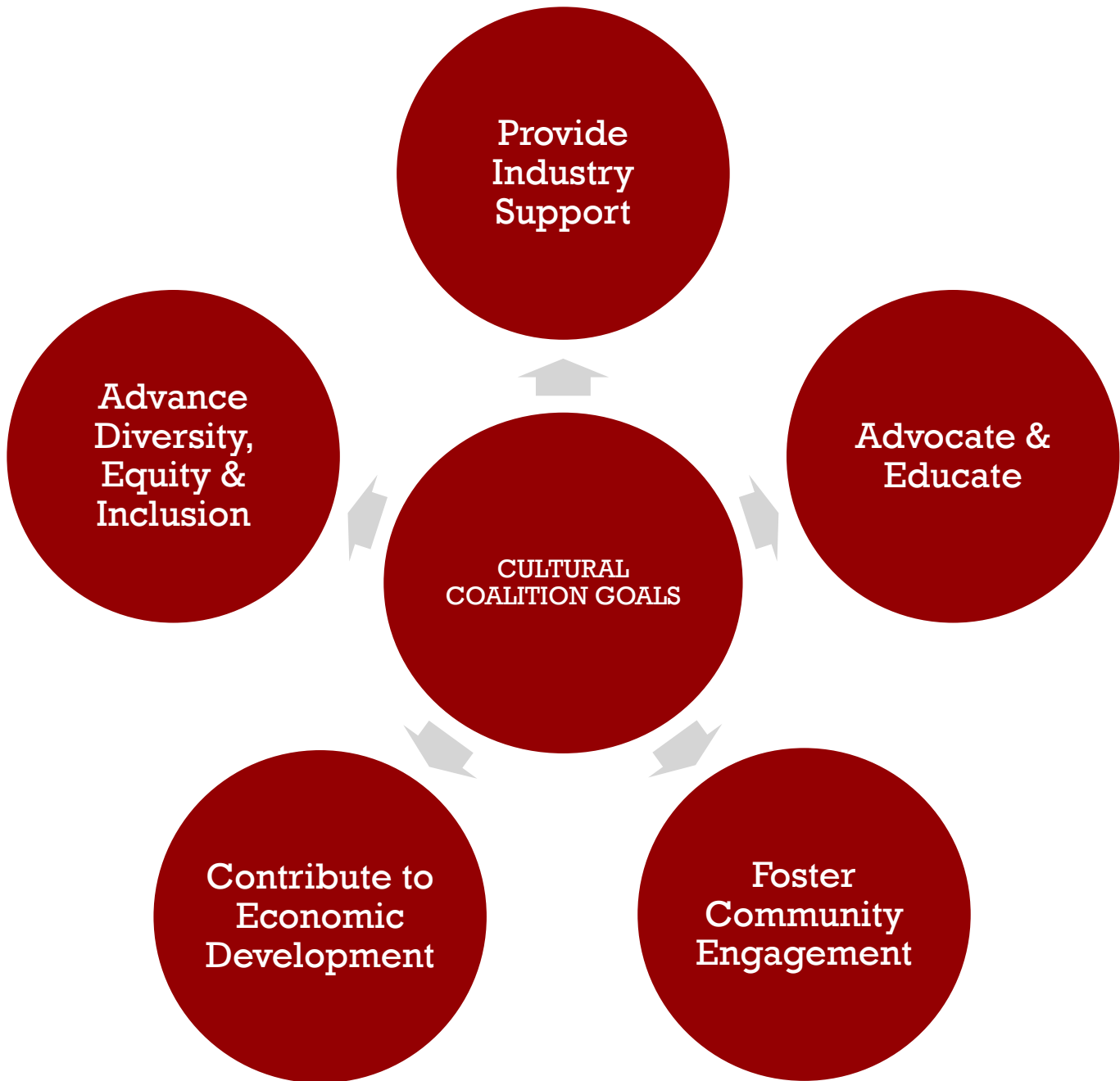
SUMMARY: Six years ago, we had a vision to define and gather the creative sector in our region, establish a connective network, serve as a spotlight for our partners and region, and create opportunities which would otherwise be unavailable. Since then, we've accomplished those goals!

In the fall of 2019, we began an intensive period of strategic planning that included 6 community meetings with 100+ people participating, 75 surveys collected, 16 new ideas evaluated, and countless staff hours. In January, 2020, our board adopted a 20-page plan.

Now it's time to invest in the next phase of the Cultural Coalition to make further economic, social and community impacts that make our region thrive.

Strategic Plan Process

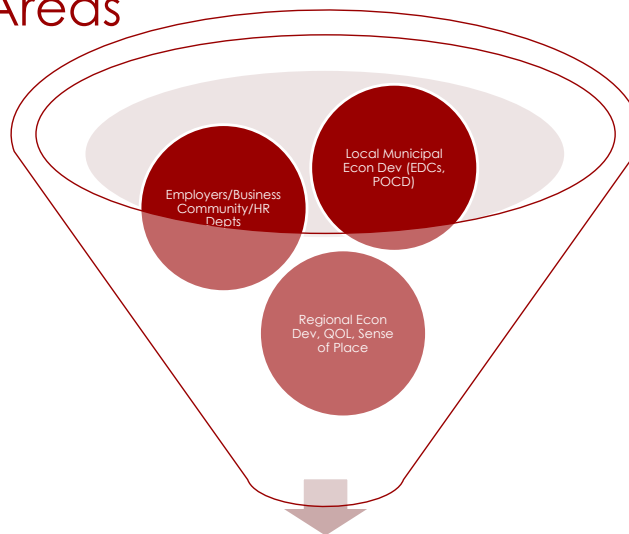




CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT Ensure that arts and culture are integral to economic development efforts



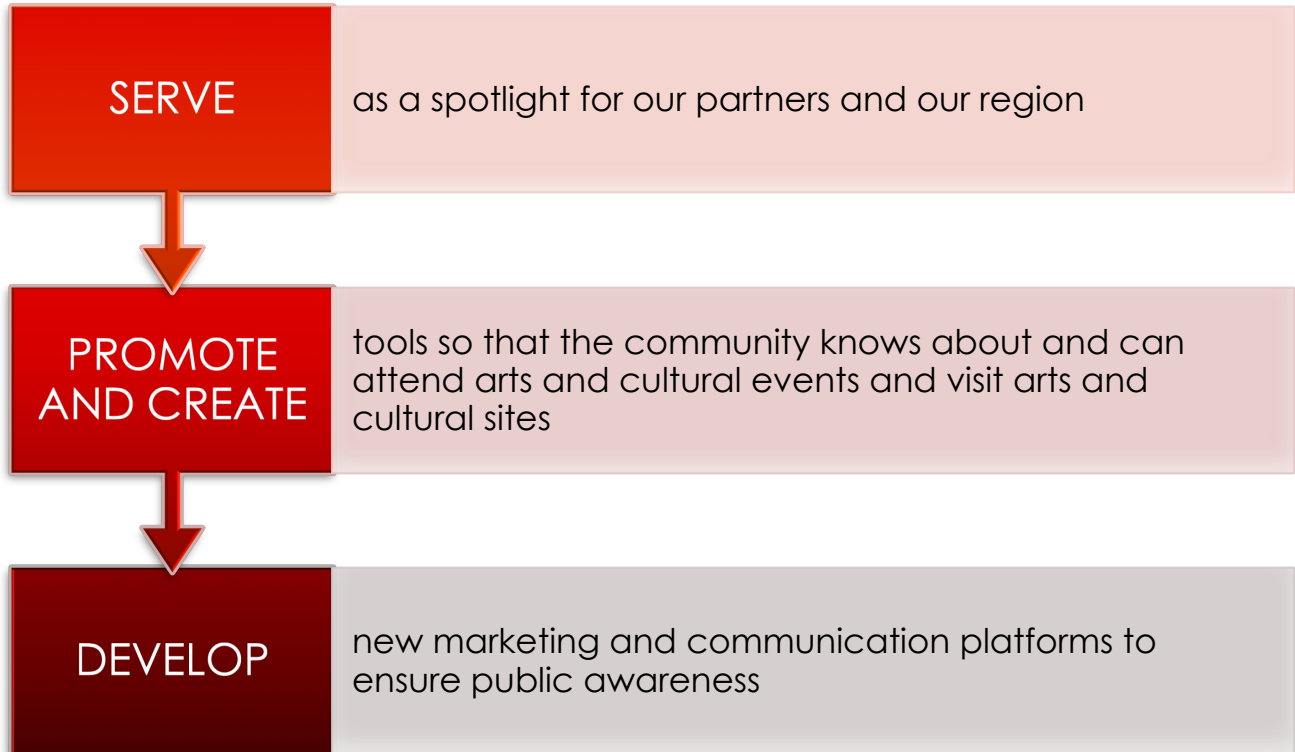
Economic Development
Focus Areas



PROVIDING SUPPORT & CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
for artists, arts & cultural orgs, creative businesses

FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Increase community engagement to connect the general public with the Cultural Coalition, our partners and the region



CREATIVE COMMUNICATION
CONNECTICUT'S EMPOWERING ART OF HEALING

As a director of art, you grasp its power to inspire, inform and entertain. But what about its power to stabilize? A new program in Connecticut is getting meaningful feedback from the at-risk and health-challenged participants of a project that involves those in who attend activities in an alternative form of treatment. Their artwork addresses "The Art of Healing" - that will lead to a variety of opportunities. Connecticut artists throughout the nation.

The project is the outcome of a cross-sector initiative of health and social service agencies that decided to try an therapy for the individuals they treat who struggle with a wide range of conditions - from mental or physical disabilities

to substance abuse, depression, psychiatric disorders, social fears and anxiety. Connecticut's non-profit Cultural Coalition, the agency now serves more than 300 individuals of all ages engaged in art-based projects, and education services for 25,000 in New London County.

Along with creative director of the Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition, explained that the decision to try art therapy was influenced by the growing needs for long-term care when it is used. Engaging patients in creative projects improves cognition, memory and concentration, reduces anxiety, depression, and stress, and helps patients to deal with grief and frustrating conditions. Artists who practice in these projects also testify that it is a rewarding and sometimes transformative experience.

In the United States, the National Endowment for the Arts is investing heavily in art therapy to treat war veterans suffering from PTSD and other ailments. Having that southeastern

in England for more than a decade. Studies there have concluded

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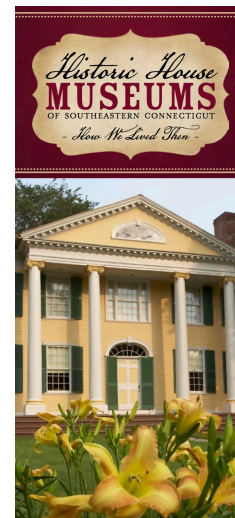
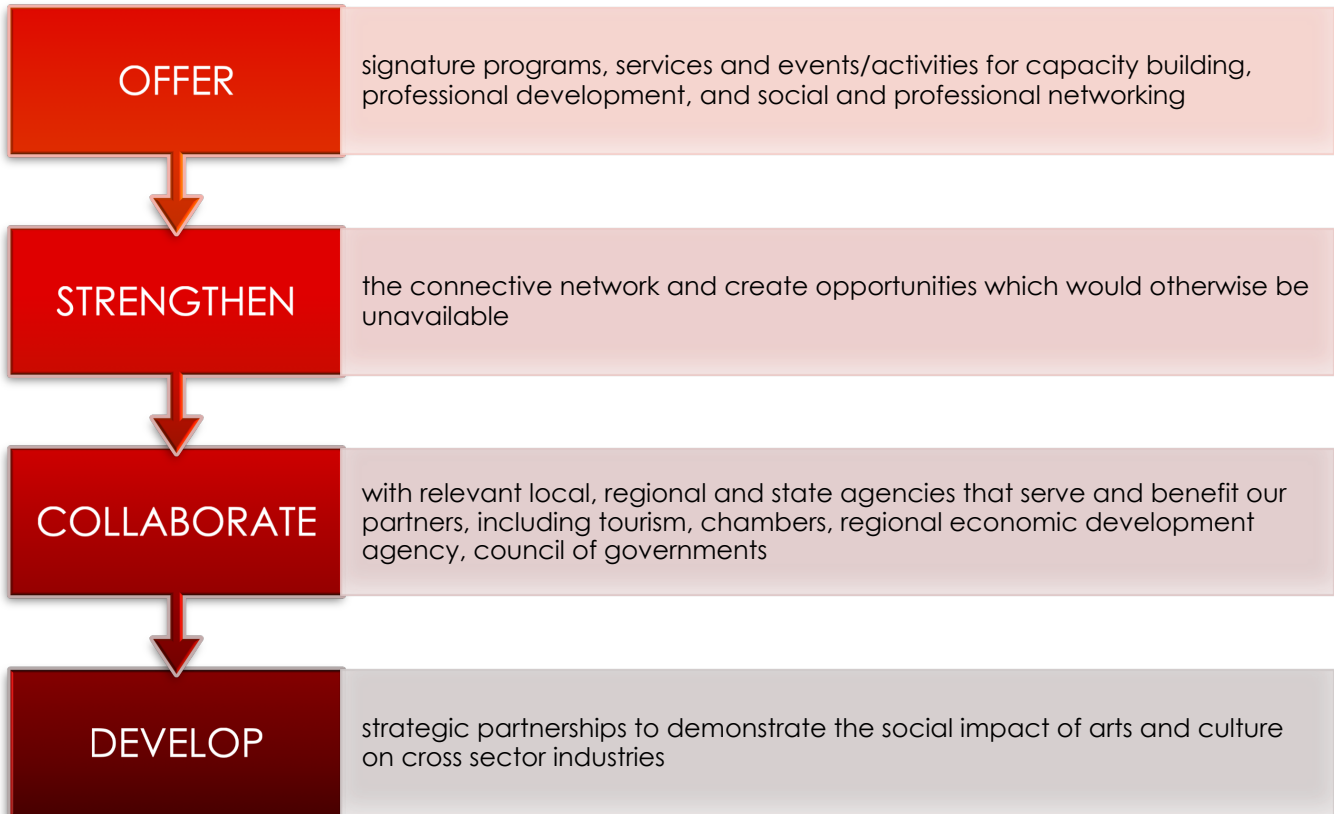
ADVOCATE & EDUCATE

Advocate for and strengthen the arts, cultural and creative community

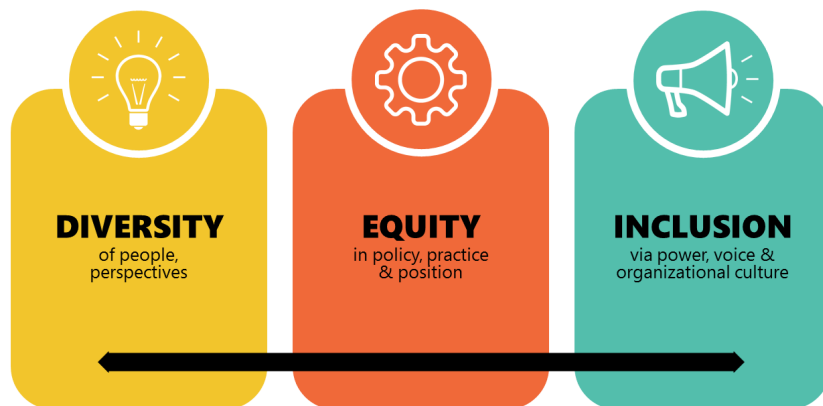
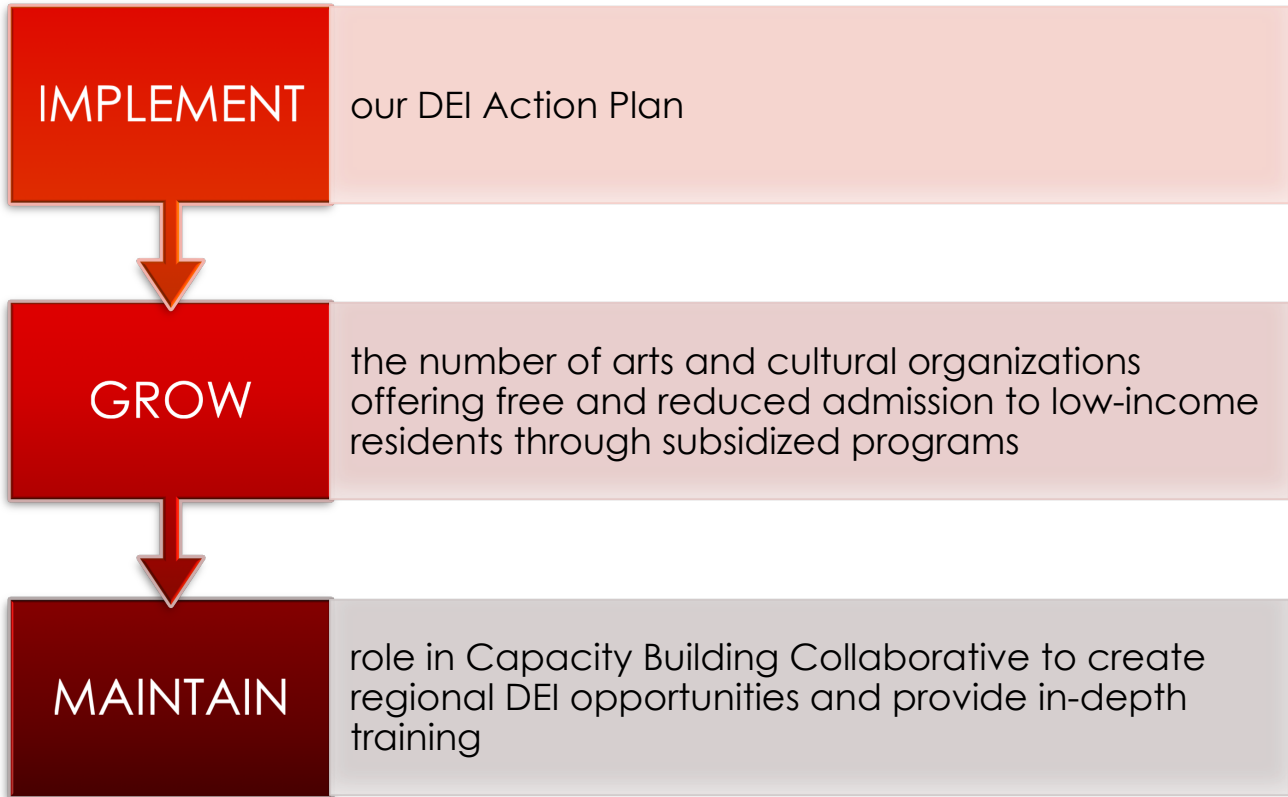


PROVIDE INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Provide industry support so that our partners and sector thrive



ADVANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION - Serve as a leader and role model for diversity, equity and inclusion



What does success look like in 2025?



ASPIRATIONS FOR SOUTHEASTERN CT IN 2025: WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Every town/city in SECT has arts & culture in its Plan of Conservation & Development.
- Local artists have more opportunities and are utilized as integral assets to community development.
- Employers are using arts and culture as a tool for attraction and retention of employees.
- SECT is top place to live, work and play because of arts & culture.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- There is no longer a disconnect between arts & cultural events and activities available and what people know about.
- Community can easily find out about events they are interested in.

ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

- 100% of local bank and corporate foundations give grants to support arts & culture.
- Increase in sponsorships of arts & cultural activities.
- State funding increases and reaches more organizations and communities.
- Arts and culture are a driver of community health and wellness.

INDUSTRY SUPPORT

- Our Partners are thriving.
- Events are sold out or full.
- Local audiences and tourism grows.
- More SECT organizations are applying for and awarded local, state and federal grants.
- There is greater connectivity and collaboration between small and large organizations and businesses improving customer satisfaction.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

- Arts and culture is a major driver of diversity, inclusiveness and equity in SECT.
- Increased diversity, equity and inclusiveness in leadership, employment and audience engagement.
- There is equity in funding, opportunities, and resources.
- No shortage for diverse board members that reflect the communities our nonprofits' serve.
- All community members have access to arts and cultural activities.
- Barriers to visiting or participating in arts and cultural activities are reduced for increased community health and wellness.
- Arts institutions are prepared for and "ready" at all times for visitors of all abilities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- Cultural Coalition has grown to its full potential.
- Cultural Coalition is financially sustainable.
- Cultural Coalition serves the region's needs.

2020 – 2025 COALITION ACTIVITIES	ARTS & CULTURAL INDUSTRY	MUNICIPALITIES	COMMUNITIES
SERVICES			
Advocacy – Representation on Local, State & Federal Issues, Key Alerts, Training	X		
Designated Regional Service Organization for CT Office of the Arts/DECD	X	X	
Research & Data Arts & Economic Prosperity Report NEW Regional Cultural Facilities Assessment Report	X	X	
Monthly Newsletter	X	X	
Cultural Connections – Directory to Arts & Culture in SECT	X	X	X
C.O.R.E. Calendar (Calendar of Regional Events)	X	X	X
Municipal Services Advising, Consulting & Project Support Sustainable CT Certification & Actions NEW Plan of Conservation & Development NEW Cultural Districts NEW Customized Municipal Report	X	X	X
NEW Business & Employee Benefits NEW Employee Recruitment Support NEW Employee Retention Support	X	X	X
NEW Ticket Surcharge Partnership	X		X
NEW Fiscal Agent Service	X		
NEW Marketing Resource (shared service)	X	X	X
NEW Art Rental Leasing (public spaces)	X	X	X
PROGRAMS			
Rising Tide Series Executive Directors Roundtable EXPANDED Regional Roundtables	X		
EXPANDED Funding Booster Program	X		X
EXPANDED Arts in Health Collaborative	X		X
Art at the Airport	X		X
Assets for Artists	X		
EXPANDED Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Activities	X		X
EVENTS			
Culture Connects (spring & fall)	X		
Make Music Day	X	X	X
Annual Legislative Breakfast/Briefing	X	X	
Thrive! and mini-Thrive! events	X		

This looks great! What can I do?

Now is the time to: 1) Sponsor an event/program 2) Become a Supporting Cast Member 3) Participate in the Ticket Surcharge Partnership 4) Make a Donation

	SERVICES	PROGRAMS	EVENTS	STAFF/ADMIN
CURRENT YEAR	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>CT Office of the Arts' Designated Regional Service Organization</p> <p>CORE Calendar, Cultural Connections, Monthly Newsletter</p> <p>Information Sessions About Issues Affecting Our Sector & Partners</p> <p>Municipal Advising & Project Support</p>	<p>Arts in Health Collaborative</p> <p>Funding Booster Program – Grants/Nonprofit Focus - drop-in grant clinics - federal grant forums -workshops</p> <p>Art at the Airport</p> <p>Annual Assets for Artist Workshop</p> <p>Quarterly Museum Directors Roundtables</p>	<p>Culture Connects (Fall)</p> <p>Make Music Day</p> <p>Arts & Culture Outlook 2020</p> <p>Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Workshop</p>	2 FT staff
YEAR 1 FY20-21	<p>All of the above and</p> <p>Enhanced Municipal Services</p> <p>Business & Employee Benefit Service</p>	<p>All of the above and</p> <p>Expanded Funding Booster Program</p> <p>New Peer Regional Roundtables</p> <p>Art at the Airport public programs at Groton Public Library</p>	<p>All of the above and</p> <p>Culture Connects (Spring & Fall)</p> <p>Annual Legislative Breakfast</p> <p>Thrive 2020</p>	<p>2 FT staff</p> <p>1 Funding Booster Program Administrator (contractor)</p> <p>1 PT Community Relations & Development Staff (contractor)</p>
YEAR 2 FY21-22	<p>All of the above and</p> <p>Art & Economic Prosperity 6 Report</p> <p>Cultural Facilities Assessment Report</p> <p>Fiscal Agent Service</p>	<p>All of the above</p>	<p>All of the above except Thrive</p> <p>Mini-Thrive</p>	<p>All of the above</p>
YEAR 3 FY22-23	<p>All of the above except AEP6 and Cultural Facilities Assessment</p> <p>Shared Regional Marketing Resource for our Partners</p>	<p>All of the above</p>	<p>Same as Year 1</p> <p>Thrive 2022</p>	<p>3 FT staff</p> <p>1 PT staff Shared Regional Marketing Resource (contractor)</p> <p>1 Funding Booster Program Administrator (contractor)</p>
Years 4 & 5 FY23-25	<p>All of the above and</p> <p>Regional Art Rental Leasing Program</p>	<p>All of the above</p>	<p>All of the above</p>	<p>All of the above</p>

Programs, Services and Events Descriptions

Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6) – Every 5 years, the Coalition facilitates local data collection from nonprofit arts & cultural organizations in New London County, including 500 audience surveys. Conducted by Americans for the Arts, the study's final report provides regional economic impact of arts & cultural nonprofits, including revenue to local and state governments, jobs supported, household income, audience demographics and audience spending.

Art at the Airport – In partnership with the Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), the Cultural Coalition provides a free and accessible public art program at Groton–New London Airport, featuring quarterly exhibits by visual artists showcasing SECT's uniqueness, history, industry, culture and geography. Now in its third year, an expanded partnership includes Groton Public Library that will offer exhibit-related public programs, lectures and activities.

Arts in Health Collaborative – Led by Cultural Coalition, a group of social service organizations with arts-based programs work to build awareness of and support for an arts approach to health and wellness. The group coordinates resources for cost savings and enhanced programming, peer-to-peer professional development, and increase accessibility to arts activities and venues.

Arts Rental Leasing Program – Cultural Coalition plan to create and manage a region-wide art rental/leasing program for public spaces.

Assets for Artist Workshop – Presented by Mass MoCA's Assets for Artists as part of a state-wide collaboration and series of professional development workshops for artists to strengthen their financial and business capacity.

Business & Employee Benefit Service – Plan for Cultural Coalition to provide arts & cultural content, information, and opportunities to corporate Human Resource Departments for use in attraction and retention of employees.

CORE Calendar (Calendar of Regional Events) – Free, multi-agency, shared calendar of events in partnership with other regional organizations including the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT, New London Main Street, and SeCTer.

Culture Connects – Social and networking event with facilitated ice-breakers attended by the region's creative community.

Cultural Connections – Online directory of registered Coalition Partners. This resource can be used to find and connect with arts and cultural resources by searches on keyword, primary category, town, or specific tags. Plans for increased promotion to expanded use by the public.

Cultural Facilities Assessment – Plan to facilitate data collection from nonprofit arts & cultural organizations in New London County. Study results to provide the first collective measurement/baseline status of the region's arts & cultural facilities (total square footage, average age of buildings/mechanicals, percentage of accessible buildings-physically and digitally, etc.).

Fiscal Agent Service – Plan for the Cultural Coalition to provide education, information, assessment, tools and guidance to launch new creative businesses. Allows artists and other small organizations to solicit and receive grants, donations, etc. before federal nonprofit status is received or to better understand the current nonprofit environment and landscape (competition, duplication, fundraising requirements) before doing so.

Funding Booster Program – Led by Cultural Coalition in partnership with CT Office of the Arts, Community Foundation of Eastern CT, CT Humanities, New England Foundation for the Arts and Office of U.S. Rep Joe Courtney, CT 2nd District, this program provides drop-in grant clinics, workshops, activities, online resources and technical support to improve arts and cultural nonprofits' ability to capitalize on local, state, New England and federal grant opportunities.

Legislative Breakfast/Briefing – Cultural Coalition hosts an annual event for Partners and the public to hear from and interact with state legislators prior to the start of the legislative session.

Make Music Day – Cultural Coalition plans, coordinates, and markets more than 100 live, free music performances across the region as part of the annual Make Music Day SECT. This global music celebration held on the summer solstice, June 21, each year in more than 1,000 cities in 120 countries, brings people of all ages and skill levels together to share music in free public performances.

Marketing Resource (shared service) – Cultural Coalition plans to offer a shared regional resource for our Partners to provide training and consultation to enhance marketing opportunities, coordinate group ads, and assist in regional promotion.

Municipal Services – Cultural Coalition offers advising, convening and project support for Mayors and First Selectmen, town councils, economic development departments and commissions, committees and project managers. Plan to expand the program to offer annual Customized Municipal Report, Plan of Conservation and Development Assessment, and Cultural District Support.

Regional Roundtables – Cultural Coalition facilitates regular meetings for professional development, information sharing, and fostering collaboration, including quarterly Executive Directors Roundtables, monthly Arts in Health Roundtable, and new peer roundtables by topic (i.e. marketing, program managers, artists). Past roundtables have produced regional projects such as the Historic Houses of SECT brochure and the Performing Arts InterSECT brochure and showcase event.

THRIVE! – Cultural Coalition's biennial half-day conference to share, learn and celebrate the creative community. The format includes: information tables, luncheon keynote speaker, and professional development breakout sessions featuring our Partners and successful projects. Plans for an off-year Mini-THRIVE in 2021 are being developed.

Ticket Surcharge Partnership – A voluntary partnership that demonstrates to your patrons your support of arts and culture in our region beyond the accomplishments and offerings of your own organization. A \$0.25 surcharge is added to each ticket sold by your organization (admission, ticketed events, or special event), which is remitted on a quarterly basis to the Cultural Coalition.

Do you like the plan?

This can only happen with you!

Learn More

- Ask us about our planned programs, services, and events
- Some programs will go from free to fee

Participate

- Attend events, join a roundtable, engage in advocacy, become a Partner

Support

- Sponsor an event
- Support a program
- Become a Supporting Cast Member
- Participate in Ticket Surcharge partnership (NEW)
- Make a donation