

CLAP HARD, CRY HARD



STRATEGIC PLAN
2024 - 2027



A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVES

As theatre lovers and makers, it is our honor to guide Seattle Children's Theatre through this next phase in our strategic evolution. We recognize the great power and privilege we hold as executive leaders, members of this community, and parents of young people to continue the organizational legacy that has uplifted stories, created connections, and inspired audiences for the last 50 years.

Across the nation, the performing arts sector has faced challenges in bringing audiences back to live theatre and a call for innovation in designing new ways to rebuild and reinvigorate audiences. Over the past few years, support from our community and commitment from our staff allowed us to expand our offerings, explore new processes to connect with audiences, execute keen fiscal management, develop new plays, and continue telling important stories—all within the context of remaining steadfast in our commitment to creating access for all young people to experience live theatre.

As we enter this period of implementing responsive programming, we recognize the importance of taking the time and space with our community to engage in thoughtful, long-term planning. Together, artists, staff, board, and educational and community partners, are working to dive intentionally and deeply into our mission.

We commit to increasing access to professional theatre and drama education while expanding the canon of new work created for young audiences so that every child sees themselves reflected in our staff, performers, teaching artists, and stories we tell.

As we gear up to celebrate our 50th anniversary, we are reflecting on our legacy and hopes for the future in this era of exploring new possibilities and opportunities to make live theatre relevant, representative, accessible, meaningful, and full of wonder and joy for our community in the Seattle region and beyond.

This plan is the path we've laid out to ground our intentions and guide our actions. We're confident that we can achieve it with the support of our staff, artists, board, and stakeholders. But if we've learned anything in the last four years, we accept and expect this to be a living document that breathes with us in response to the world we live in, the resources we have, and the young people we serve.

IDRIS GOODWIN
Artistic Director

KEVIN MALGESINI
Managing Director

Our mission is to provide children of all ages access to professional theatre, with a focus on new works and theatre education.

At Seattle Children's Theatre (SCT), we are proud to be one of the most prominent theatres for young audiences in the United States and the world. Founded in 1975, SCT has a long history of artistic innovation and excellence. Approaching our 50th anniversary, we will have produced 292 plays, including 122 world premiere productions, all crafted specially to communicate with young audiences. Through our work, we spark the imagination, inspire learning, and create a lifelong appreciation for the arts.



STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS OVERVIEW

The 2024-2027 strategic plan is informed by feedback and input from board members, staff, and external stakeholders collected through a discovery process asking key questions about what makes SCT special, its strengths as an organization, the biggest needs of families and children, and opportunities to increase our impact. We worked with Vessel Consulting to guide the full strategic planning process, who, along with our strategic planning team, was thoughtful in ensuring we weave our equity, diversity, and inclusion principles throughout all aspects of the information gathering and strategy development.

IMPLEMENTATION

The strategic plan serves as a living, working document. We will create a roadmap to actualize the strategic plan goals and objectives, with annual goals and activities including key tasks, milestones, timeframes, and roles and responsibilities for implementing the work. The roadmap and additional work plans created by teams will help hold all of us accountable and build relationships across the organization and between leadership and staff to bring our thoughtful, comprehensive strategic plan to life.

ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

The following organizational priorities emerged, framing the high-level goals, objectives, and metrics that comprise our 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. These priorities will build on our strengths while leveraging opportunities and considering challenges that have impacted our ability to deliver on our mission.

- 1 Maximize the Impact and Reach of Core Programs
- 2 Rebuild and Expand Audiences (Participants: Audience, Education & Engagement youth, donors)
- 3 Invest in SCT: People, Operations & Facilities

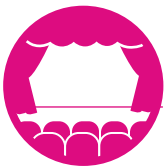
KEY THEMES FROM THE DISCOVERY PROCESS

The following themes emerged through this discovery process, highlighting strengths, opportunities, and challenges for SCT that shaped the final 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.



INSPIRE JOY AND WONDER FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES.

SCT has a 50-year history and a strong reputation in our region for offering unique experiences for children, youth, and families. We have been unwavering in our commitment to putting youth first, and are often a child's first experience at live professional theatre or any cultural art experience. SCT reaches across generations, encouraging families to experience the joy of theatre together and, for some adults, sparking memories of coming to see shows when they were young, now sharing that experience with their own children.



BUILD NEW AUDIENCES AND BRING THEATRE TO MORE GROUPS.

Through intentional planning, we can continue connecting with current partners while expanding to new audiences through site-specific programming and deepening partnerships with schools, culturally specific groups, tribes, and others who may not historically have participated in our programs. Continuing to grow and deepen partnerships is also important to our sustainability and funding strategies.



EXPAND AND DEEPEN SCT'S COMMITMENT TO CREATIVE, REPRESENTATIVE STORYTELLING.

SCT has prioritized programming diverse stories of triumph and joy led by BIPOC artists to maximize the impact and reach of our core programs. Seeing oneself represented on stage does wonders for imagining a fruitful future and opening up possibilities. Diverse representation also provides learning opportunities about cultures and traditions that are not one's own. SCT can continue to deepen and build on this area of growth and opportunity.



UPLIFT AND CENTER THE STAFF, TALENT, AND PERSPECTIVES AT THE HEART OF SCT'S WORK.

Our staff and artists uphold our mission and values in how we shape the patron experience and in being part of making an impact. The high caliber of our staff and artists is at the heart of SCT, and implementing strategies to retain good people through competitive wages and growth opportunities is paramount, along with strategies to recruit staff from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences.



STRENGTHEN SCT AS AN ORGANIZATION THROUGH IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION.

These last few years of weathering the pandemic and recovery have presented challenges in building a cohesive culture within the organization. Improving our internal communications and operations will strengthen our services and support to our team and the community, enabling us to best deliver on our mission.



REINFORCE SCT'S COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND ACCESS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

Access to theatre is central to our mission, and we strive to break down the structural barriers and inequities that have historically excluded children from these opportunities so that everyone may benefit from experiencing live theatre and arts education - a commitment we plan to further center in all aspects of our work. Updating our facilities in line with accessibility best practices, and investing in staff training to support SCT's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals are key parts of moving this effort forward.



MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL IMPACT THROUGH SCT'S LANDMARK LOCATION AT THE SEATTLE CENTER.

Theatre upgrades are a critical component to delivering on our mission, audience expansion, innovation, and opportunities to engage in new ways. Focusing on improvements to our facilities positions us to create enhanced programming, share space with community partners, and capitalize on opportunities that our location offers.



2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: OPERATIONS & CULTURE

Cultivate a SCT culture of connection and clear, efficient operations, rooted in belonging, equity and inclusion.

We will implement strategies to research, define, implement, and measure the experience and engagement of the Good Humans within our organization, including our staff, board, volunteers, artists, and partners.

STRATEGY 1.1

Improve Systems of communication and accountability throughout the organization

OBJECTIVE 1.1.1

Define vision, strategies and plan for developing the SCT culture, incorporating input from all SCT employees and volunteers.

OBJECTIVE 1.1.2

Implement increased supports, professional development opportunities and annual review process for employees and volunteers.

OBJECTIVE 1.1.3

Create and implement a comprehensive plan for employee onboarding and trainings.

STRATEGY 1.2

Coordinate and amplify our equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives.

OBJECTIVE 1.2.1

Coordinate staff & Board EDI efforts into a collective SCT effort with shared strategic goals, one overarching plan, clarity of roles and common language.

OBJECTIVE 1.2.2

Create and implement an ongoing plan for communicating SCT Equity goals, initiatives, and progress internally.

OBJECTIVE 1.2.3

Create and implement an ongoing plan for communicate SCT Equity goals, initiatives and progress externally.

STRATEGY 1.3

Assess market opportunities and build internal readiness and alignment for significant strategic opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 1.3.1

Research and evaluate business model opportunities. Must include financial modeling, anticipated audience impact, intersection with EDI Strategic Plan and access priorities.

OBJECTIVE 1.3.2

Realign organization to support significant growth projects and evaluate internal structures for readiness, including structural recommendations and financial implications.



2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 2: ACCESS & EXPERIENCE

Grow SCT revenue and participation by increasing access and delivering dynamic and unforgettable experiences, for young people and their communities, every time.

Deepening our focus on reducing barriers to accessing our programming, we will work toward fulfilling our mission and commitment to access for all and expand opportunities to increase our revenue in new and exciting ways.

STRATEGY 2.1

Enhance the participant journey, from opt-in decision to post-program engagement, so that we are able to provide exciting, singular experiences each time, enabling SCT to retain existing participants and attract new participants.

OBJECTIVE 2.1.1

Define what a singular, exciting experience at SCT is. Develop as-is and to-be maps of SCT Experience touchpoints, creating a shared understanding of the participant journey, and utilize in crafting a plan for improvements.

OBJECTIVE 2.1.2

Dramatically increase year-over-year household retention in all categories: Donors, Public & School Audience, Education & Engagement.

OBJECTIVE 2.1.3

Significantly increase ticket sales revenue.

STRATEGY 2.2

Enhance existing Access Programming, and develop new access initiatives to meet unaddressed barriers.

OBJECTIVE 2.2.1

Plan and implement an accessibility strategy, in which we define the barriers, real or perceived, SCT wishes to address, and articulate specific goals for each.

OBJECTIVE 2.2.2

Develop Access Programming sub-budget, including expenses and revenue needed to underwrite each offering.

OBJECTIVE 2.2.3

Establish partnership with community organizations in support of each accessibility offering, one which facilitates both consultation with the community for which the accessibility accommodation is crafted, and the opportunity for cross promotion.

STRATEGY 2.3

Add an element of activation, beyond the classroom or stage, to all programming.

OBJECTIVE 2.3.1

Provide at least one element of activation for each play starting in 2025-26 season.

OBJECTIVE 2.3.2

Provide at least one activation beyond the classroom or studio for each of Education & Engagement programs starting in 2025-26 Season

OBJECTIVE 2.3.3

Evaluate Active Audience Guides and relaunch in two formats, one for Educators and another for Public Audiences.



2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 3: PROGRAMMING & PRODUCING

Leverage the broad possibilities of how high-quality, high-impact, theatre based experiences can be created and presented, across budget levels, to expand the youth and communities we reach.

Building on SCT's legacy, we will innovate and design new approaches to theatre, leveraging our strengths to grow, experiment, collaborate, and truly fulfill our potential as an organization and in the community.

STRATEGY 3.1

Leverage our assets (community, facilities, past work) to expand models of high-quality, high-impact theatre production.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.1

Monetize our archive of plays, sets, costumes by SCT or other organizations.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.2

Pilot activation of SCT's facility using multiple spaces within the building for programming produced by SCT and others.

OBJECTIVE 3.1.3

Develop SCT Originals Program and process including branded intellectual property, from productions to curriculums.

STRATEGY 3.2

Standardize the practice of strategic partnerships and co-productions around bold, innovative projects, to share costs and increase impact.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.1

Increase the number of opportunities people have to engage in SCT programming and diversify those types of engagement.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.2

Establish mutually beneficial, multi-year partnerships with reputable institutions/organizations whose expertise will enhance SCT's programming.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.3

In partnership with new funding sources, launch a sustainable Social Impact and Civic Engaged Production Series.

STRATEGY 3.3

Increase collaboration and alignment of objectives in program areas (artistic programming, production, education/engagement) to maximize staff time and ingenuity.

OBJECTIVE 3.3.1

Implement a partial ensemble model, where more SCT employees can leverage their skill set by participating in SCT productions.

OBJECTIVE 3.2.2

Build pathway from training programs into Mainstage Season, and professionals back into engagement & education, creating cross-over opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3.3.3

Create and implement strategic plan for advancing SCT's production technology, equipment and trainings.



2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL 4: IMPACT & BRAND

Elicit greater connection and impact in our community by leveraging the power of storytelling, on stage and off.

As we approach our 50th anniversary, we see this moment of celebration and change as a time to deepen our community engagement through partnerships, new ways to tell powerful stories, and innovation to inspire and bring joy through theatre.

STRATEGY 4.1

Strengthen and elevate the SCT brand by telling the story of SCT – Stories of impact, stories of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

OBJECTIVE 4.1.1

Craft and launch plans for recognizing SCT's 50th Anniversary Season.

OBJECTIVE 4.1.2

Craft and launch brand-level media plan in support of the 50th Anniversary, which leverages stories of SCT's impact from diverse perspectives across generations, identities, and platforms.

OBJECTIVE 4.1.3

Create and launch plan for SCT Brand messaging and fundraising campaign post-50th anniversary.

STRATEGY 4.2

Deepen connection to SCT by bringing audience and supporters into the process of theatre making and new work development.

OBJECTIVE 4.2.1

Define SCT's New Work process, including communications strategies, opportunities for audience engagement, and process for audience feedback.

OBJECTIVE 4.2.2

Pilot and evaluate opportunities for audiences to engage with SCT productions before they open, resulting in a suite of engagement opportunities.

STRATEGY 4.3

Define Community Impact for SCT and how we measure it.

OBJECTIVE 4.3.1

Collectively establish a common vocabulary and definition of what community impact is to SCT, utilize in supporting 50th anniversary messaging and craft vision for SCT future.

OBJECTIVE 4.3.2

Create a system for evaluating community impact opportunities, in relationship to SCT mission, vision, values.

OBJECTIVE 4.3.3

Create a clear definition of community partnership at SCT, including a system for setting clear goals and expectations on a partnership-by-partnership basis.