



Board of Directors

September 24, 2021



AMS
PLANNING
& RESEARCH



AGENDA

- I. Background
- II. Data Review
- III. “Purpose”
- IV. Next steps

Desired outcome:

**To agree upon a
purpose statement
for approval by the
TO Live Board**

Project Plan



Assessment of Current State



- ✓ Background Review
- ✓ Environmental Scan and Competitive Venues
- ✓ Business Context
- ✓ Key Informant Interview
- ✓ Internal Alignment Survey
- ✓ SWOT Analysis and Defining Success Workshop

Assets and Opportunities



- ✓ Defining Success- A Vision of the Future
- ✓ External Interviews
- ✓ Industry Trends and Best Practices
- Organizational Change

We are here



Strategic Framework



- Defining the Goals
- Future Scenario (s)
- Objectives and Strategies
- Recommendation and Implementation
- Final Workshop & Presentation

Monitoring



- Monitoring strategic plan process

Mission & Vision

Mission

TO Live believes that the arts are crucial to create healthy, vibrant, and engaged diverse communities. TO Live strives for excellence in everything that we do. We are stewards of landmark City theatres and activate our spaces through programming and rentals. We are a creative hub for audiences, artists, and all those who work for us.

Vision

Building a better city through the arts.

Core Values

- DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: We foster a sense of belonging in everything we do. We strive to be an anti-racist organization.
- INNOVATIVE: We are unafraid to experiment and to push the boundaries of creativity.
- EXCELLENCE: We strive to be the best in class in all we do.
- ACCOUNTABILITY: We value responsibility and take ownership of our work and actions.
- ADAPTABLE: We see opportunity in embracing our changing world.
- COMMUNITY-MINDED: We listen to and are responsive to the people and groups we serve.

The mission is a **guiding light to the future of TO Live**, but there is room for improvement based upon past execution

52%

believe past mission execution could use improvement

74%

rate the mission as important or very important to the future

"Success for TO Live would include participation that reflected the diversity of Toronto, animation of their public spaces and a range of engaged partnerships."



Phase 1 Summary

External Environment

Competitive,
growing, and
diverse



Wide variety of venues and
increasing competition



49.5% of residents
are immigrants



Median age of 39.3



52% visible minorities,
many from south and
east Asia



4th largest indigenous
population in Canada
(46,000+)

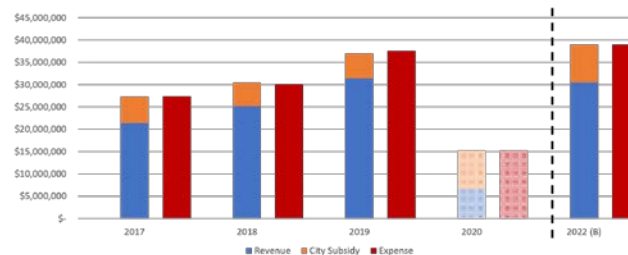
A region known for **its diversity**
and immigrant population



Strong regional economic
and job growth projections

Internal Business Context

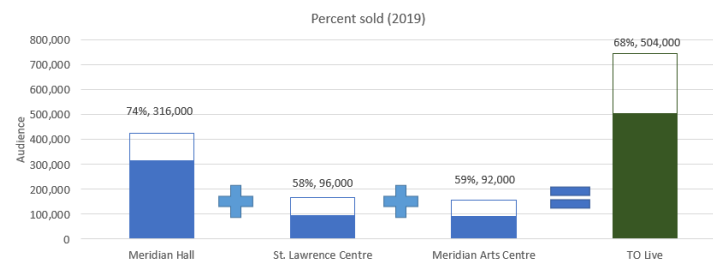
Purpose should define the use of available calendar inventory in venues



Strong **revenue and activity growth** trends



Rentals enable programming investment

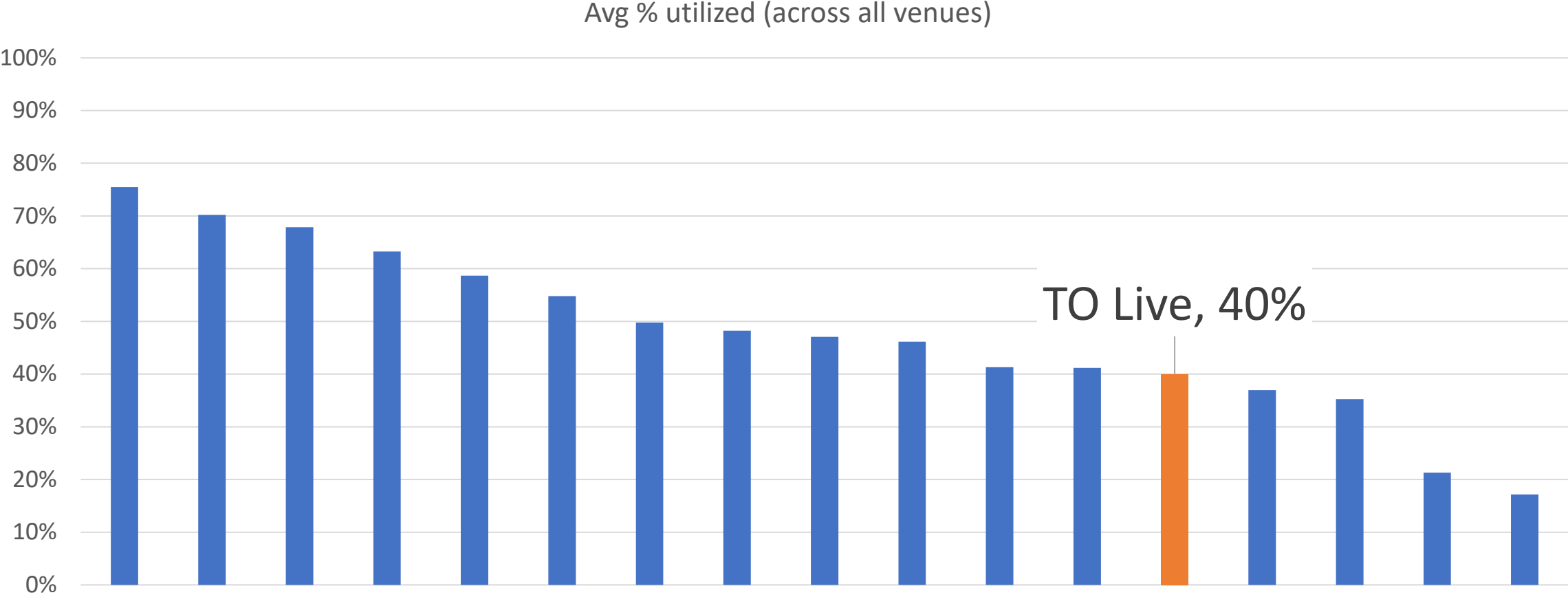


Available inventory for additional activity



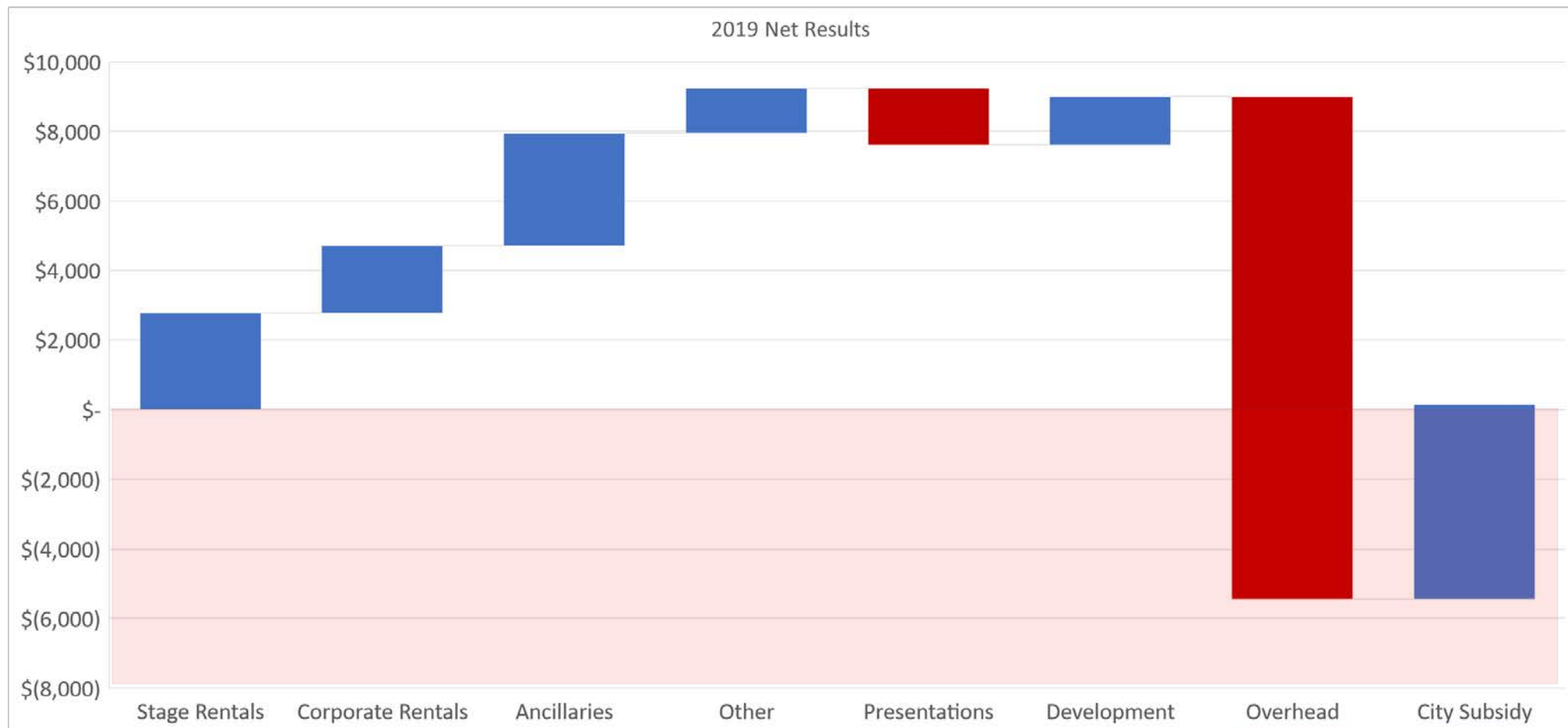
Positive trends in **earned revenue and philanthropy**

Compared to peer performing arts centers in the US and Canada, TO Live falls in the bottom third in terms of percentage utilized by venue activity



2019 Results

Investment in presentations are offset with rentals and/or contributed income



External Interview findings are consistent with internal themes

Strengths

- Buildings are keen asset
- Strong leadership is in place
- City relationship, if navigated properly, can be a great asset

Challenges

- Articulation of public benefit
- Limited community or brand awareness
- Increasing competition
- TO Live / City government cohesiveness needed
- Build community relationships
- Need more staff, Board and audience diversity
- High costs, access are barriers to supporting arts & cultural institutions

Opportunities

- Enhance collaborations
- Partners are important
- Become a community gathering place

TO Live's Purpose is the lens through which Success is achieved

$$(\text{Opportunity} + \text{Activity} - \text{Competition}) f_x (\text{Purpose}) = \text{Success}$$



Objective:

Establish alignment
around TO Live's
future purpose

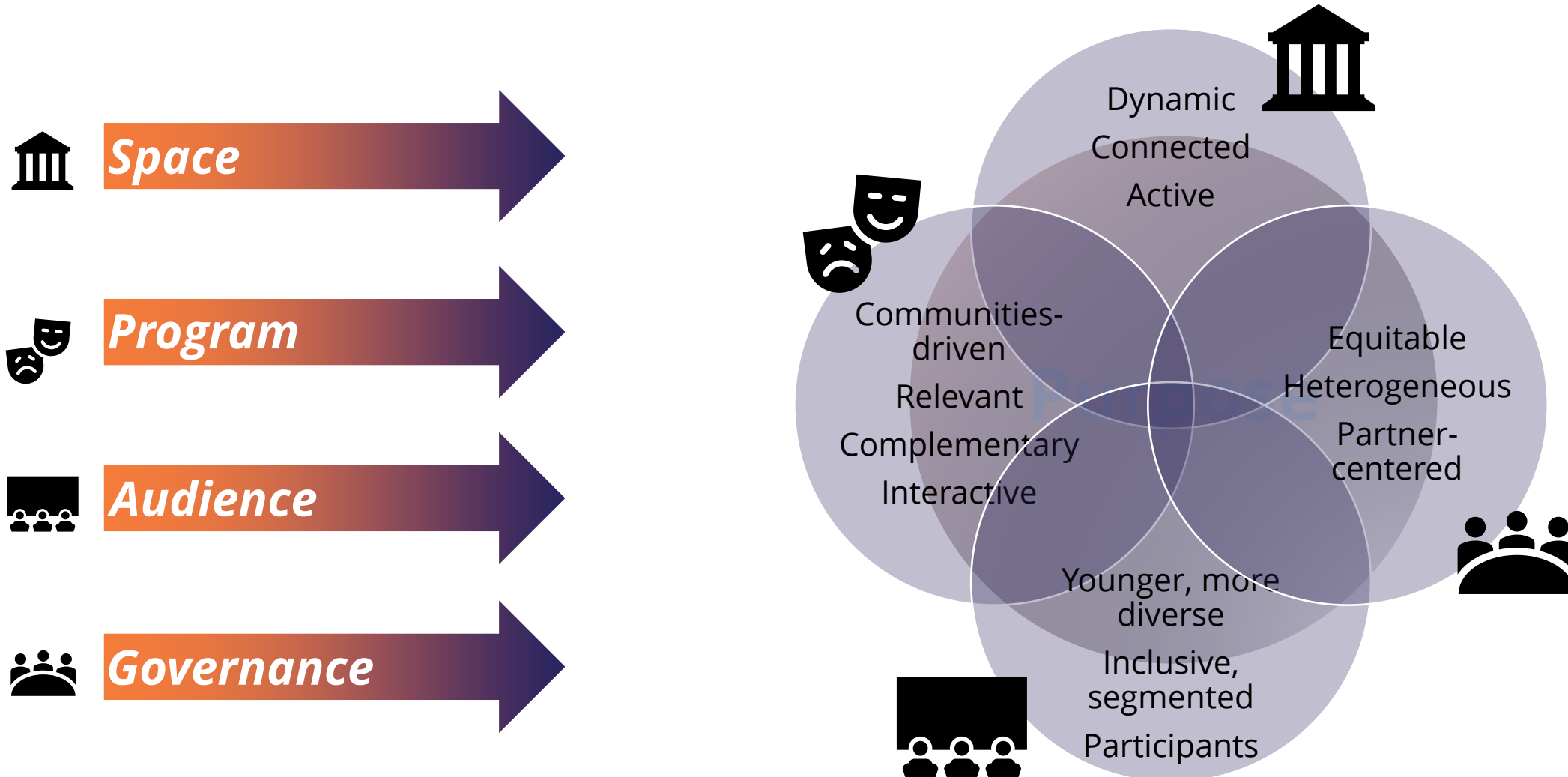
Trends and Best Practices

Key Findings

- There are distinct pathways that lead to the development of performing arts centres
- Purpose is intertwined with context, speaking to why an enterprise does its work and who it serves
 - In response to real-time public sector, social, and business priorities
- Resourcing 'purpose' requires nimbleness and creativity
- The role of the public sector has changed
 - Broad and deep purpose for cultural venues' development, programming and operation
 - Particular emphasis on social priorities

WHAT'S NEXT?

Generation 6 – A purpose-driven anchor institution



Data highlights

Community relationship building is critical to the future...

Over 90%

rated statements related to building community relationships as 'important' or 'essential'

Staff & Board agree on the primacy of forming deeper relationships with culturally diverse communities

"TO Live could have a significant impact on the GTA if it would further engage the community."

...and includes
creating welcoming
spaces for **audiences
of all kinds**, and
enabling **access for
local arts groups**.

"Be community champions."

96%

believe it is 'important' or 'essential' to make special efforts to be inclusive of all, and to present diverse, representative programming

*Strong alignment between staff and Board
on **inclusiveness,
diversity, and serving
local artists***

Both **TO Live Presents** *and* programming partnerships are important to the future

Over 90%

cite the importance of TO Live Presents; nearly 90% also say that it will be important to maintain key not-for-profit partnerships

*Staff and board aligned around **both partnership AND rental business** investment*

Divergence of opinion

Program

Staff & board
have different
priorities for
program
development

Program

Staff

(*'essential' or 'important'*)

Board

(*'essential' or 'important'*)

Accessible education

85%

60%

Producing original work

72%

50%

Incubation programs

56%

80%

Diversification of revenue, particularly government and earned sources, is critical to forming a thriving operation

"[It is] important for [TO Live] to develop a structure that would allow them to have stability year after year."

More than 95%

of respondents believe it is 'important' or 'essential' to both advocate for government monies and engage new sources of earned revenue

*Staff and board are aligned around the importance of **revenue diversification** (earned, government, and individual philanthropy)*

Key Themes

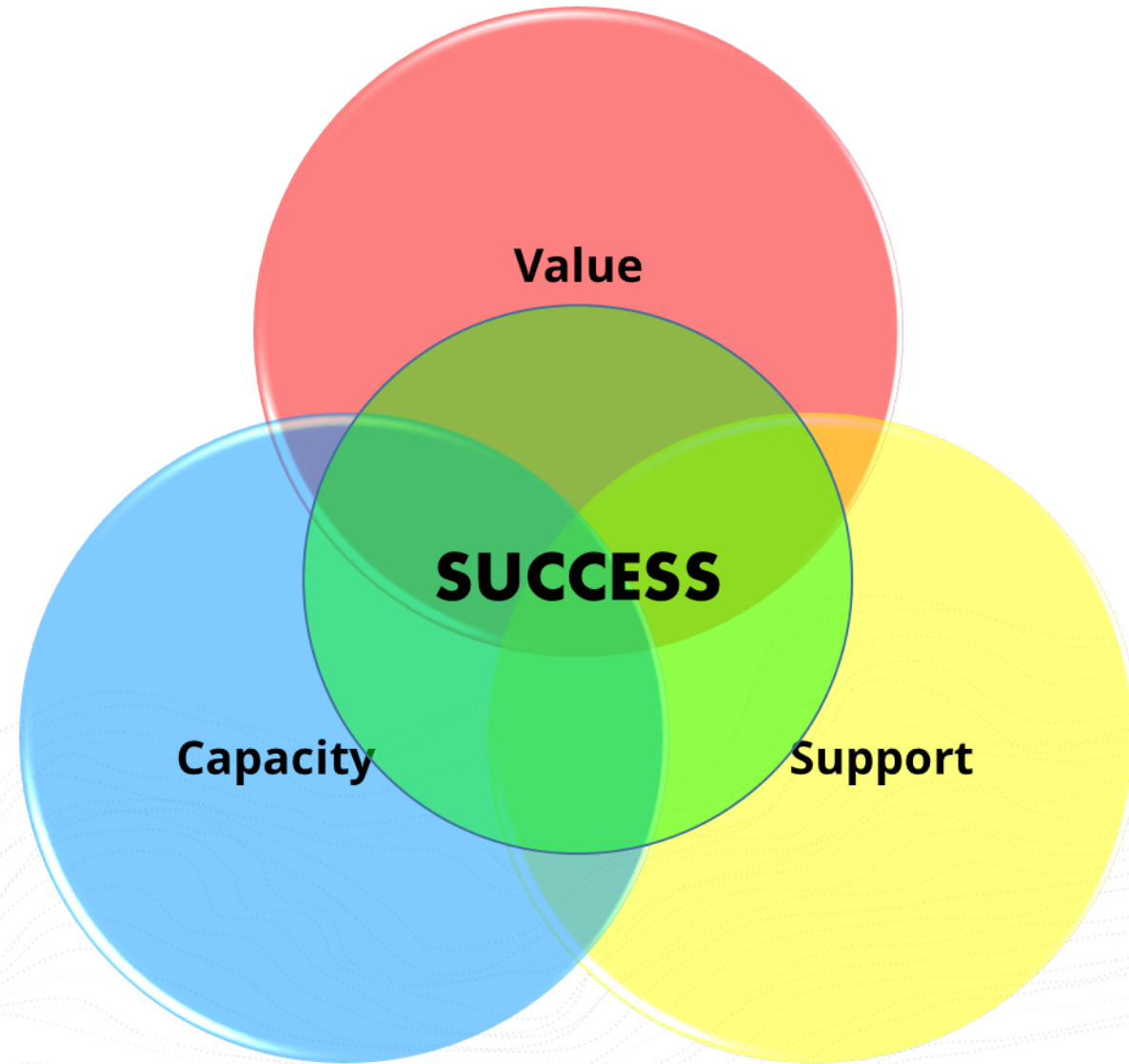
- Success = community **relationship building**
- Activity should be **diverse, inclusive and accessible**
- **Serving Toronto artists** is critical
- **Presenting *and* partnerships** are both part of TO Live's future
- Need to **diversify revenue** streams
- Improve **interorganizational communication**; clarify and delineate roles of staff and Board
- Institutional diversity and express **commitment to principles and outcomes of IDEA** are critical



Defining Success & Key Questions

'Success'

When the *value* an organization provides is balanced with its *capacity* to serve its purpose, and with public *support* for the work, the result is success

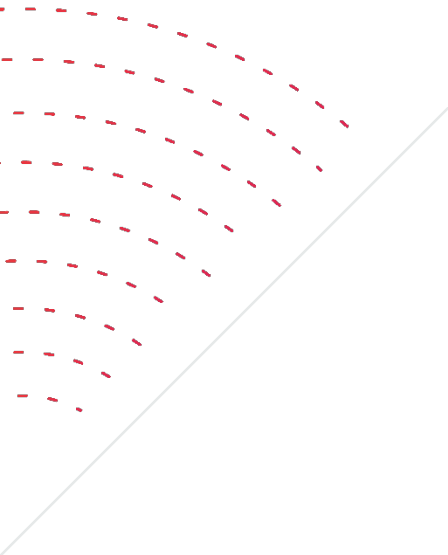


"Strategic Triangle" – Herman 'Dutch' Leonard / Mark Moore
Kennedy School of Government – Harvard University

Success Identified

- Community awareness and engagement
- Wide-ranging recognition
- Broad, inclusive program offerings
- Continued nurturing of current, and developing new partnerships
- Support arts and cultural institutions
- Robust activity and attendance
- Diverse staff and Board
- Board alignment
- Straightforward fiscal model with revenue diversification

Framing purpose



Purpose	▶ Why you do it and for whom
Vision	The impacts you aspire to make
Mission	What you do
Values	How you do it

There are many ways to be effective,
all linked to clarity of purpose.

Developing Priorities

Is TO Live's purpose to...?

- Activate.....TO Live venues to a greater extent
and?
- Support.....more arts and cultural organizations
and?
- Engage.....a wider constituency
- Attract.....diverse communities
- Cultivate.....creative partnerships
- Foster....a stronger support of civic aims

Staff workshopped a series of questions

What does it mean to create inclusive and welcoming spaces?

How can TO Live be most effective in serving the City of Toronto, its communities, and TO Live's resident companies and arts ecosystem?

How does TO Live's risk programming achieve its goals? How does the organization balance risk programming with its other objectives?

What community and social impacts can TO Live generate, through resource allocation, partnerships and collaboration?

How does TO Live's evolving 'purpose' align with a specific role(s)? What operating structures or practices would best represent and support that alignment?

What steps can be taken to help strengthen staff and Board alignment?



TO Live's Purpose

TO Live's Purpose:

The purpose of TO Live is redefine the role of performance spaces as a force for social engagement, cultural exchange, and creative innovation.

Landlord, Host, Presenter

Less

Risk Tolerance

More

Landlord

- Passive operating model, often used in public sector.
- Typically no at-risk activity by the venue.
- No pro-active booking of the facility.

Host

- “Intentional” relationship between major tenants and owner/operator.
- Tenants provide the majority of programming.
- Owner/operator has limited programming risk – and limited control.
- Pro-active booking of available calendar dates.

Presenter

- Operator is responsible for operations *and* programming.
- Operator has programming and calendar control – and the majority of risk.
- Pro-active booking of available calendar dates.

Less

Control of Content

More



Comparables

Other peer organizations place emphasis on their role as activator, enabler, or engager



Place/Landlord: Living Arts Centre

Runs a multi-purpose venue which offers 210,000 square feet of technically advanced theatres, meeting rooms and exhibit space



Centre/Host: Arts Commons

Programs over 800 events across its nine venues annually, with a bit over 10% at-risk and nearly 50% produced by resident companies



Engagement/Presenter: NAC

Has invested in supporting the creation, dissemination, and celebration of indigenous people's performance arts through the NAC Indigenous Theatre.



Scenarios



Scenario 1: *Place/Landlord*

*Activate the assets, communities,
neighbourhoods*

- Efficiency (building utilization)
- Primary metric: direct and indirect economic benefit (users, neighbours, regional partners)

Scenario 2: *Centre/Host*

*Enable local artists and arts
organizations*

- Arts-ecosystem focused
- Creative industries collaboration
- Community activation (participation)
- Primary metric: positive impact on arts ecosystem

Scenario 3: *Engagement/Presenter*

Engage communities

- Accountability & justice
- Democratic governance
- Resource allocation → social justice and inclusion of historically marginalized voices

Next Steps

Strategic Framework

- How does the draft purpose statement resonate? Is there agreement?
- What are the implications for institutional development and culture?

Next Steps

- **September 24** – Board presentation & discussion of TO Live purpose
- **October 22** – P&P meeting to discuss goals and institutional implications
- **November 8** – P&P meeting; review of draft plan
- **November 16** – Strategic plan presentation to the Board