

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–2018



MISSION

We empower Iowa to build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting Iowans to the people, places and points of pride that define our state.

VISION

Iowa is recognized as a state that fosters creativity and serves as a catalyst for innovation where the stories of Iowa are preserved and communicated to connect past, present and future generations.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- To preserve and promote Iowa's collective heritage and unique sense of place
- To cultivate creativity, participation and learning in the arts
- To engage diverse statewide audiences through education initiatives, exhibitions and public programs
- To provide tools, resources and knowledge to promote networking, collaboration and best practices to nurture cultural leadership
- To invest in people and projects that foster economic growth and enhance the cultural identity of local communities

PRIORITIES 2016-2018

- Partnerships
- Storytelling
- Technology
- Internal Collaboration
- Metrics

VALUES

Responsiveness: We believe our priorities and programs should be adaptable, reflecting and respecting the evolving needs of Iowans.

Community: We believe culture at its root is a shared experience and we seek to foster relationships among people with everything we do.

Creativity: We believe that encouraging new ideas, approaches and fresh thinking are necessary for Iowa and our organization.

Collaboration: We believe partnership is essential to achieving greater impact, relevance and sustainability for our organization and our state.

Ingenuity: We believe in making the best use of the resources that we have, including space, time, expertise and dollars.

Stewardship: We believe it is our responsibility to preserve Iowa's cultural legacy and resources.

What Iowans Want from the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

The Department of Cultural Affairs convened community conversations across Iowa to elicit a vision for arts, history and culture based on the needs and wants of Iowans. After hearing from over 1,500 Iowans, the department is better positioned to help build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting Iowans to the people, places and points of pride that define our state.



Connectivity

Iowans want opportunities for residents, creative businesses, arts and cultural organizations, and others to network with each other and across the state. They are looking to the department to provide and facilitate opportunities to connect, communicate, and access resources.



Awareness

Promoting Iowa's identity as a progressive, innovative and culturally healthy state that has much to offer is imperative for many Iowans. Iowa has too many "best kept secrets" and we need to ensure Iowans – and those outside our borders – are aware that Iowa and its communities are culturally vibrant and have much potential to seize.



Sustainability

Capacity-building and providing access to resources to ensure sustainability of Iowa's art, heritage and cultural assets was a top priority for Iowans. Communities want the department to help enable them so they can grow and thrive, implement long-term visioning with community buy-in, and identify ways to attract and retain young talent.



Education

Communities want access to creative learning experiences, especially for students related to arts in education and Iowa history. The department can enhance these innovative learning experiences, and continue to help build a 21st century skilled workforce.



Cultural Center for All Iowans

Iowans want a state flagship museum for Iowa that is reflective of all 99 counties.



Strategic Plan Progress Report

In the final year of its 2016-2018 Strategic Plan, many of the Department of Cultural Affairs' recent accomplishments and initiatives were informed by the five themes heard from Iowans. Here's a snapshot of just a few.

Connectivity

In response to Iowans' desire for more opportunities to connect and network with their peers across the state, the Department has continued to host the biennial [Iowa Arts Summit](#) to bring together Iowa's arts community for networking and professional development to celebrate the arts in Iowa; the annual [Preserve Iowa Summit](#) explores the latest trends in historic preservation through lectures, workshops and tours; and the new Iowa Film Festival Summit convenes leaders from the state's various [film festivals](#) to discuss best practices for celebrating Iowa's film industry and building local economies.

Awareness

We heard loud and clear Iowans' interest in telling our state's story and raising the profile of its vibrant cultural identity. We launched the [Iowa Culture app](#) to highlight more than 3,500 cultural landmarks and "best kept secrets" in all 99 counties. We also kicked off our [#NotToBrag](#) campaign to give Iowans a license to brag about their own communities. Produce Iowa and the Iowa Arts Council teamed up with Iowa Public Television to launch a new TV series called "[The Film Lounge](#)," which showcases short films produced by Iowa filmmakers and raises awareness about the state's vibrant film scene. Helping make all this possible is a newly overhauled [iowaculture.gov](#) website with a user-friendly platform, streamlined access to department resources, and dedicated blog content exploring Iowa culture topics.

Sustainability

From preserving their local historical resources to seeking out programs that help communities design a more creative future, sustainability remains top of mind for many Iowans. To this end, the State Historical Society has digitized many of its research tools, simplified the applications for the [Historical Resource Development Program](#) and [Historic Preservation Tax Credits](#), and developed long-term plans for the Blood Run National Historic Landmark, among other [historic sites](#), that will sustain Iowa's cultural legacy for generations to come. For its part, the Iowa Arts Council has amplified programs to sustain artists and communities – such as the [Iowa Artist Fellowships](#), [Arts Build Communities Grants](#), and [Iowa Great Places](#) program – reducing hassle along the way by making all of its grant applications paperless.

Education

Iowans want more opportunities to learn about culture, including access to Iowa history resources and creative learning experiences. The State Historical Society has developed an array of programs to help educate each generation of lifelong learners, including [Goldie's Kids Club](#) for the state's youngest historians and a partnership with the Library of Congress that provides [online primary resources](#) for teachers and students. The Iowa Arts Council's [School Arts Experience](#) grants connect students to arts learning opportunities in and out of the classroom, while [ArtUps](#) offer online workshops that help artists and arts administrators alike brush up on valuable career-building skills.

Cultural Center for All Iowans

As a destination where the Department's varied functions all intersect, Iowans expressed a desire for the State Historical Museum to serve as a cultural center that celebrates all 99 counties. An ongoing array of events, exhibits and collaborations involving the State Historical Society of Iowa, the Iowa Arts Council and Produce Iowa honor the spirit of that desire in such exhibits as "[Portrait of Maquoketa](#)" by Iowa artist Rose Frantzen; [Iowa History 101](#); [Hollywood in the Heartland](#) and more.



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