



DNA

DYNAMIC NEW APPROACH

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“The goal of the 2012–2016 plan is to animate the MIA with a dynamic 21st-century program and operational model that will ensure the institution’s long-term success. The plan will maximize new opportunities to engage people powerfully in the art and history of world cultures past and present.”

—Kaywin Feldman, MIA Director and President

In a process beginning in late 2011, the MIA developed a strategic plan (the DNA) for 2012–2016 that will build on past plans, respond to current economic conditions, and position the MIA for future, ongoing success. A significant part of this process included an analysis of current cultural, social, economic, technological, and political trends affecting museums. The results of this analysis indicate a need for changes in the museum’s business and program model.

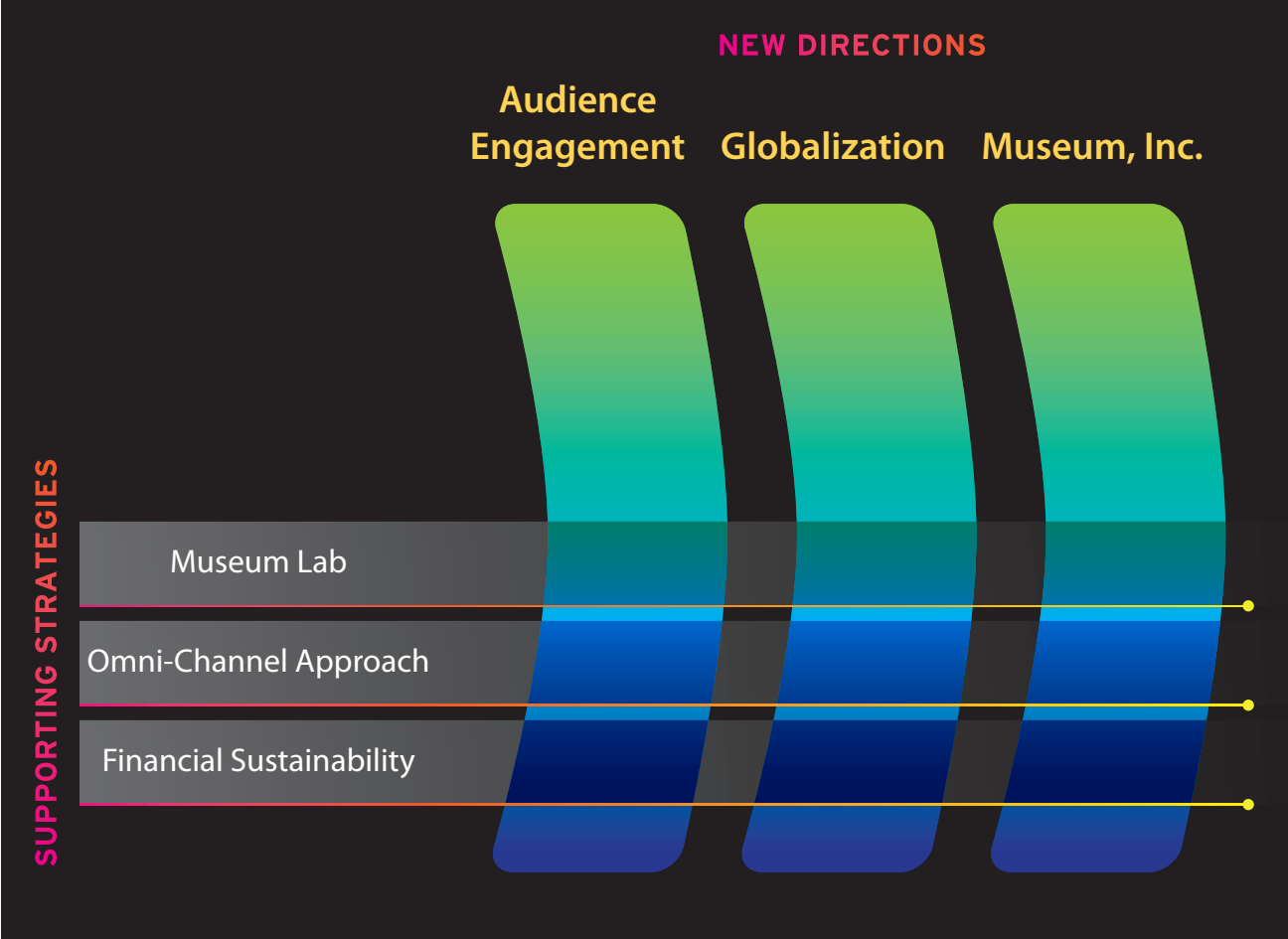
A recent report on the current condition of art museums from the Innovatrium at the University of Michigan puts the challenge in stark terms: “[T]he bad news is that all of the museums are facing declining attendance, donor fatigue, siloed operations, and increasing competition for the time and attention of both paying and non-paying customers. The museums also lack the flexibility to respond in real-time, are inwardly focused (often seeking to please professional but not popular audiences), and do not have the technology they need to keep pace with visitor expectations or improve operational efficiency.”

The good news remains, of course, the outstanding quality of the museum’s collection, the dedication of its staff and volunteers, and the community, foundation, and corporate support it has built over its nearly 100-year history.



Ancient and modern art come face to face in the Bruce B. Dayton Rotunda, a reflection of the MIA’s contemporary arts initiative.

With the understanding that the traditional museum model is no longer sustainable, the DNA identifies innovative ways for the MIA to adapt. In doing so, the new museum model must meet the expectations of today’s audiences by offering them opportunities to participate in the creation of the museum’s content and brand and by engaging them through their preferred communications channels. The model must also incorporate additional ways to raise revenue. To establish this new model, MIA staff members and supporters will adopt the practices of thinking creatively, leading collaboratively, and taking measured risks.



Strategies

The 2012–2016 strategic plan identifies three directions for growth: audience engagement; globalization; and a dynamic 21st-century business model dubbed “Museum, Inc.” The planning process included benefit and risk analyses for each direction, which are articulated in the plan.

In pursuing these three directions, the MIA will employ three supporting strategies: Museum Lab, a practice to embed experimentation and collaboration across departments; “omni-channel,” a unified approach to deliver an integrated museum experience across all modes of customer interaction; and financial sustainability. The interdependence of these directions and supporting strategies is detailed in the plan.

Major Recommendations

To increase audience engagement, we will:

- Inspire our broad, changing audiences through diverse, relevant, and exciting in-gallery programming supporting 21st-century learning skills.
- Offer online modules to create new ways for learners to interact with the museum.
- Support lifelong learning through the design and development of MIA-branded fee-for-service educational programs featuring our materials, content, and intellectual resources.
- Create a platform and place for teens to discover, organize, and share both online and on site.

To embrace globalization, we will:

- Concentrate acquisition resources on global art.
- Assertively credit source cultures by highlighting the impact of artistic styles, techniques, and technologies across historic geopolitical borders through dynamic gallery installations.
- “Globalize the local and localize the global” through topical, responsive programming that demonstrates the museum’s relevance to its diverse participants.
- Amplify the museum’s brain trust by exchanging key staff with their foreign counterparts for extended residences.



Vincent van Gogh, Dutch, 1853–90, *Olive Trees*, 1889
Oil on canvas, The William Hood Dunwoody Fund 51.7



Over several weeks, local artist Marcus Young created a site-specific performance within the MIA during his MAEP exhibition.

To build Museum, Inc., we will:

- Construct a new revenue model that diversifies our financial structure.
- Make data-driven decisions related to the market and participant behaviors.
- Seek out new opportunities for revenue that are sustainable and consistent with the museum’s mission.
- Ensure an adequate level and mix of capitalization.
- Realize financial efficiencies through partnerships, consolidations, and collaborations.
- Assure consistent communication of the MIA brand across all platforms.
- Strengthen dialogue between employees and supervisors to empower staff to question and innovate.
- Create pilot projects and secure seed money from investors.

Outcomes/Success

Chief indicators of success for audience engagement:

- On-site participation options and activities increase in diversity.
- School partnerships grow to include six districts.
- Community partnerships are a vibrant and branded resource network within and beyond the metro.
- Teens assist in programming and producing teen-centered activities in the museum and online.
- 15% of docents implement new online delivery methods.
- Programs generate revenue through sponsorship or fee for service.

Chief indicators of success for globalization:

- 40% of exhibitions and rotations address the global transmission of art and culture. Installations attract ethnic communities by addressing their traditions, cultures, and concerns.
- A global revenue program offering training, consulting, exhibitions, and curriculum is launched.
- International partnerships increase from 10% to 20%.
- Surveys reflect significantly increased interest in global collections and concerns.

Chief indicators of success for Museum, Inc.:

- Endowment corpus for operations increases significantly.
- Earned revenue of operating budget increases from 5% to 20%.
- Income from online sales increases by 5%.
- Three-year average of overall participation (offsite, onsite, online, and virtual) increases by 25%.
- MIA achieves awards and recognition for omni-channel approach initiatives.

The Way Ahead

The 2012–2016 strategic plan is bold, ambitious, and introduces a new paradigm of greater innovation and financial sustainability for the museum. In reading these pages, you will see the results of months of rigorous thinking, market and museum trends analysis, and input from MIA leadership and staff. As “DNA” suggests, the museum is embracing a Dynamic New Approach at its cellular core to ensure it remains relevant, accessible, inspiring, and imperative to all our communities, both local and global, for generations to come.

