



**HAWAII**  
**STATE FOUNDATION on**  
**CULTURE and the ARTS**

**2025 – 2029  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

## Executive Summary

The Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) was established in 1965 with the mission to enrich the lives of residents and visitors by promoting, perpetuating, and preserving culture and the arts throughout Hawai‘i. In 2023, SFCA embarked on a comprehensive, inclusive strategic planning process, led by GUILD Consulting, to gather broad community input and forge an action-oriented five-year plan for a post-COVID environment.

The planning effort engaged a broad spectrum of Hawai‘i’s arts and culture community, including 437 respondents to a comprehensive survey designed by GUILD Consulting, in-depth interviews with key leaders, and six public community meetings across all islands. This widespread participation and feedback affirmed the existing strengths of the SFCA, particularly its well-regarded grant programs, its critical support for individual artists, and the dedication of its staff. The engagement process also illuminated three core areas essential for growth and strategic focus. First, the community’s desire for the SFCA to become a more visible, vocal, and effective advocate for arts and culture, championing sustained increases in funding and resources. Second, stakeholders strongly emphasized the need for ensuring statewide equity, calling for improved outreach, communication, and physical presence in Neighbor Island communities to strengthen access to the SFCA’s collection, resources, and programs. Finally, community was adamant that the perpetuation and support of Native Hawaiian culture and arts must remain a primary and amplified focus across all the SFCA’s initiatives.

In response to this invaluable community input, the SFCA has adopted four visionary strategic pillars designed to strengthen its role as the State’s official arts agency: HŌ‘OIA-AFFIRM (to make true), HO‘ONA‘AUAO-EDUCATE (to disperse information), HO‘ĀKOAKOA-CONVENE (to call together), and HO‘OKANU-CULTIVATE (to plant). Each of these strategic pillars is presented along with an explanation, accompanying objectives, and strategies in this document.

By committing to these strategic pillars, the SFCA will strengthen existing programs, pursue needs-responsive initiatives, embrace a culture of transparency, and ultimately create a more vibrant, equitable, and sustainable future for the arts and culture sector across the entire State of Hawai‘i. Success will be measured through a robust Implementation and Monitoring Plan that tracks resources, milestones, and measurable outcomes, with progress reported regularly to the Commission and the public.

**A Message From the  
Executive Director:  
Our Roadmap For the  
Next Five Years**

Aloha kākou,

I am thrilled to share the Strategic Plan for the SFCA—a visionary roadmap that will guide the Foundation's work for the next five years.

This plan is not a document created in isolation. It is the result of a collaborative effort, deeply informed by the perspectives of our community, artists, cultural practitioners, educators, and organizational partners across Hawai‘i. It reflects the expressed needs and ambitions of both the SFCA and the constituents we serve. Together, we recognize the growing complexity of our local and national political landscape, as well as the social and economic realities that impact the daily lives of the people who call Hawai‘i home and the visitors to our state. This plan is designed to be responsive to these challenges.

## Building on a Strong Foundation

This strategic plan builds upon the spirit of our previous efforts while recognizing the significant changes in our agency, the State of Hawai'i, and the federal landscape since then. In short, it is the SFCA's roadmap, charting the course of action we will take over the next five years, as we commit to strengthening access to the arts, improving constituent services, seeking diverse sources of funding, and more effective organizational systems.

### Why the Arts Matter

The core of our mission is driven by a deep conviction in the transformative power of the arts. At the SFCA we believe that the arts are not a luxury; they are essential to a thriving society:

- **The Arts Define Our Identity:** They preserve and celebrate Hawai'i's unique cultural heritage and traditions. By supporting the arts, we ensure that the stories, practices, and legacies of Hawai'i are maintained for future generations.
- **The Arts Elevate Our Quality of Life:** They are a powerful engine for civic discourse and collective problem-solving. Furthermore, public art is a vital and enriching part of our built environment, making our public spaces more beautiful, meaningful, and welcoming.
- **The Arts Foster Our Keiki's Success:** They stimulate imagination and promote crucial skills like critical thinking, communication, and innovation, setting our keiki up for success in school and beyond.
- **The Arts Drive Our Economy:** They are significant economic drivers, creating jobs and revenue, and attracting business and tourism to our islands.

### A Living Commitment

We view this Strategic Plan as a living document. Each year, the SFCA will meticulously update our Strategic Plan implementation action plans to reflect emerging needs, lessons learned, and changing conditions. As an agency, we will continuously strive to support and uplift a vibrant and healthy Hawai'i, where the arts are thriving, celebrated, and essential to the lives of everyone.

We are excited about the future and look forward to welcoming you at Capitol Modern, at SFCA events, programs, and collaborations across the state, and through our virtual collections and offerings.

Mahalo nui loa for your continued support of the arts and culture of Hawai'i.

Warmly,

**Karen Ewald**

*Executive Director, State Foundation on Culture and the Arts*

## About Us

### History and Context

The Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) was established in 1965 by the Hawai‘i State Legislature as the state’s official arts agency. From its inception, the SFCA has worked to enrich the lives of Hawai‘i residents and visitors through diverse arts and cultural programming and initiatives.

The creation of the state arts agency was key to making Hawai‘i eligible for federal grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, which was established on September 29, 1965, as part of the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities.

The SFCA’s first leadership was appointed by Governor John Burns. Pundy Yokouchi served as the first member and Chairperson, appointed on January 14, 1966. Alfred Preis was the first Executive Director, formally appointed on July 1, 1966, after serving as Acting Executive Director.

In 1967, the State Legislature enacted the Art in State Buildings Law that established the Art in Public Places Program within the SFCA, the first such program in the nation. A separate method of funding for this program was created through accessing one percent of the construction cost of new state buildings, making Hawai‘i the first state in the nation to establish a percent-for-art law.

Hawaii’s “percent for art” law requires that 1% of the construction and renovation costs of state buildings be allocated to the Works of Art Special Fund for acquiring and commissioning art for public places.

Initially, the SFCA was situated within the Office of the Governor and was located in the Princess Victoria Kamamalu Building at 250 South King Street in Honolulu. Today, the SFCA is located in the No. 1 Capitol District Building at 250 S. Hotel Street. This location also houses Capitol Modern (formerly the Hawai‘i State Art Museum) and other state offices.

The history of the site traces back to 1872, when it was originally home to the Hawaiian Hotel and later the Armed Services YMCA Building. The current structure was dedicated on March 16, 1928, after the original building was torn down in 1926. Designed in the Spanish mission style by Lincoln Rogers of Emory & Webb, the two-story, U-shaped building notably included a swimming pool in its courtyard.

The State of Hawai‘i acquired the building in December 2000. Following renovations that began in November 2001, the second floor—with its grand lobby, high ceilings, and architectural accents—was dedicated to the Hawai‘i State Art Museum, which opened to the public on November 3, 2002. We look forward to celebrating Capitol Modern’s quadranscentennial in 2027.

## VISION

We envision a thriving and vibrant Hawai‘i enriched by culture and the arts.

## MISSION

The mission of the Hawai‘i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA) is to promote, perpetuate, and preserve culture and the arts in Hawai‘i.

## VALUES

- We celebrate and emphasize the cultural richness and diversity of Hawai‘i.
- We believe in equitable access, transparency, and community-based decision making.
- We share in the responsibility to perpetuate the Native Hawaiian culture and the arts.
- We view art and cultural engagement as critical to the educational, economic, and social well-being of individuals, communities, and the State of Hawai‘i.
- We commit to being responsible stewards of Hawai‘i’s artistic legacy by diligently preserving, professionally caring for, and thoughtfully expanding the State Art Museum’s collection for the benefit of current and future generations.

## What We Do

The SFCA promotes and documents the public value of the arts. We are dedicated to expanding access and opportunity to the arts and artists of Hawai'i. Our commissioners and staff work together to design and advance the following core initiatives:

- **Arts Education.** We support high quality, standards-based arts education as a part of PreK-12 basic education. Each year, the SFCA hosts student exhibitions, advances Artists in the Schools (AITS) programming through paid residencies, operates the Hawai'i Open Arts Program (HŌ'Ā), an 'āina-based arts program that helps students develop emotional well-being & a sense of place, develop resources for teachers, and design and deliver needs-based and culturally sustaining professional development opportunities for Hawai'i's teachers. Additionally, the SFCA, supports the collaboration of arts education organizations throughout the state by convening the ARTS FIRST Partners, an initiative established by the State Legislature in 2001.
- **Art in Public Places.** We manage and protect the state art collection, a shared cultural resource. The Art in Public Places program acquires completed, portable works of art (Relocatable Works of Art), and commissions artists to create works of art for specific locations (Commissioned Works of Art). These works of art are displayed in over 640 sites statewide including schools, libraries, hospitals, airports, state office buildings, the State Capitol and at Capitol Modern (the Hawai'i State Art Museum).
- **Grantmaking.** We provide funded opportunities to expand access to the arts and art participation statewide. Grants and fellowships are major parts of the SFCA's outreach, providing funding to support nonprofit organizations, individuals and schools that provide training and services in the arts, culture, and humanities across the state.

## Strategic Planning Process and Framework

In July 2023, the SFCA contracted GUILD Consulting to assist with strategy analysis and development and to support the SFCA in developing a five-year, action-oriented strategic plan. The strategic planning process involved extensive statewide engagement, including review of extant data, internal discussions, key informant interviews, community listening sessions on all islands, and the administration of a stakeholder survey, ensuring diverse voices from across Hawai‘i were heard.

Through extensive stakeholder engagement and data collection, the SFCA has identified four strategic pillars that will guide our work over the next five years. These pillars will inform how we allocate resources, design programs, recruit and grow our staff, and shape our operational work.

The SFCA will measure success against a set of performance metrics put forth in the SFCA Strategic Priorities Implementation and Monitoring Plan. This plan clearly defines the performance metrics, resources, activities, milestones, and measurable outcomes necessary for Commissioners and staff to effectively evaluate success, track progress, and respond proactively to identified challenges. Progress against these metrics will be tracked through the SFCA’s strategic performance management system and be publicly reported at regular Commission meetings and detailed in the annual SFCA Annual Report.

The SFCA thanks all stakeholders for their invaluable thoughts, concerns, and recommendations, and remains committed to strengthening and broadening participation in the arts through strategic engagement, exhibitions, grantmaking, and programming.

## STRATEGIC PILLARS

Our strategic plan is built upon four interconnected pillars that are equally essential to our mission.

### HO‘OIA AFFIRM

#### TO MAKE TRUE

Affirm and acknowledge our place and the community we serve: MOANANUIĀKEA

### HO‘ONA‘AUAO EDUCATE

#### TO DISPURSE INFORMATION

Strengthen arts and culture in education for all ages and communities

### HO‘ĀKOAKOA CONVENE

#### TO CALL TOGETHER

Build community capacity for creativity, communication and learning

### HO‘OKANU CULTIVATE

#### TO PLANT

Establish a framework for developing creatives and new audiences

## Hō‘oia

### OBJECTIVE 1.1.

#### FOSTER THE ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS OF HAWAII'S DIVERSE CULTURES AND COMMUNITIES.

##### Strategies

- a) Institute a Community Curatorial Residency program, inviting members from diverse communities (e.g., specific ethnic groups, LGBTQIA+ communities, disability advocates) to serve as temporary curators to develop exhibitions or programs based on their lived experiences.
- b) Deepen relationships across diverse communities by listening, co-creating, and reflecting the stories and voices of the people we serve.
- c) Develop diverse collections, innovative programming, and strategic communications to grow broad community engagement.
- d) Utilize our collections, exhibitions, and public programming to elevate artistic expression reflective of the border Pasifika experience within local communities through investment in needs sensing, programming, and partnerships.
- e) Audit collections to identify gaps in representation and to diversify acquisition strategy, prioritizing artists, art forms, and cultural materials from underrepresented groups.
- f) Review and revise collection plans including strategic deaccessioning actions. Develop a clear, actionable Strategic Deaccessioning Policy to optimize collection relevance, reduce long-term care costs, and align the collection with the museum's renewed mission.

## Hō‘oia

### **OBJECTIVE 1.2.** HONOR, SUPPORT AND PRIORITIZE NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURE, ARTS, ARTISTS, AND CULTURAL PRACTITIONERS.

#### **Strategies**

- a) Grow the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i as primary or co-equal text in gallery interpretation, ensuring linguistic accuracy through community vetting.
- b) Regularly host and fund convenings (quarterly or semi-annually) with Native Hawaiian organizations (e.g., cultural centers, Kaiapuni schools), cultural practitioners, and individual community members to discuss organizational priorities and identify community needs.
- c) Establish a revolving schedule of exhibitions featuring Native Hawaiian contemporary and traditional arts that travel statewide, ensuring deep reach into non-urban and neighboring island communities.
- d) Collaborate with the Department of Education and the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) to refine and distribute standards-aligned curricula centered on Native Hawaiian arts and cultural history, featuring works by living artists.

## Hō‘oia

### **OBJECTIVE 1.3.** AMPLIFY VOICES BY EXPANDING AWARENESS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

#### **Strategies**

- a) Host regular, structured “Community Listening Sessions” (quarterly) outside of the museum walls, with a public commitment to report back on how community feedback has been implemented in museum operations, programming, and policy.
- b) Facilitate inclusive outreach, utilizing diverse methods, such as state-wide “listening tours,” artist and arts organization convenings, town hall forums, legislative briefings, online discussions, and surveys, to both disseminate information and gather broad input from all communities, including underserved and rural areas.
- c) Formalize a process for providing museum expertise, data, and resources to government agencies and civic groups across the state, to inform policy related to culture, education, and city planning. This transforms the museum from a passive recipient of support to an active civic resource.
- d) Develop clear metrics for community engagement that move beyond attendance numbers to assess reciprocity, mutual benefit, and long-term impact on partner organizations and communities.

## Ho‘ona‘auao

### **OBJECTIVE 2.1.** SUPPORT AND EXPAND OUR STATEWIDE PARTNERSHIPS IN PROVIDING ARTS EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS.

#### **Strategies**

- a) Bridge partnerships between the Hawai‘i Department of Education, HAIS, and community arts organizations by providing evidence-based professional development to ensure access to high-quality and engaging arts education offerings for PreK through grade 12 educators.
- b) Work to significantly increase funding for Artists in the Schools (AITS) by seeking public and private funding (e.g., federal grants, foundational grants and donations), with the goal of placing professional artists in all Hawai‘i public and public charter schools for impactful residencies of varying length.
- c) Focus on marketing to and developing relationships with schools that have never applied for AITS residencies, especially in historically minoritized/low income/rural areas.
- d) Scale specialized programs (e.g., HŌ‘A, dementia-friendly tours, sensory-friendly hours for people with disabilities, oral history workshops with elders) that meet the needs of various populations, with appropriate training for museum staff and docents.
- e) Allocate resources for a comprehensive needs assessment or landscape study focused on the current state of arts education in Hawai‘i, with the goal of better understanding what is abundant and what is missing in school and community spaces.
- f) Strengthen financial capacity and enhance mission driven impact through the diversification of funding streams (e.g., seeking grants, foundational support, private giving, refining the existing facility rental program) and expansion of community partnerships.
- g) Continue to align efforts with ARTS FIRST initiatives and partners, focusing on research, professional development, advocacy, and expanding awareness of the value of arts education.

## Ho‘ona‘auao

### **OBJECTIVE 2.2.** EXPAND COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS

#### **Strategies**

- a) Host state-wide and community specific workshops, artist residencies, and demonstrations led by cultural practitioners (e.g., traditional weavers, musicians, storytellers, folk and Indigenous dance) to ensure the transmission of intangible heritage.
- b) Strengthen and scale partnerships with organizations like University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Outreach Arts, the Department of Education, HAIS, and the Hawai‘i Community Foundation to increase the frequency of traveling exhibits, workshop series, and artist presentations aimed specifically at youth, kupuna, and residents in rural areas/historically marginalized communities, leveraging community centers and libraries as host sites.
- c) Prioritize expansion of engagement with kūpuna, neighbor island residents, and historically marginalized communities.
- d) Grow connections and relationships with the Department of Health and health non-profits, acknowledging the deep intersections of arts, wellness and healing.

## Ho‘ākoakoa

### **OBJECTIVE 3.1.** BROADEN PUBLIC AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS

#### **Strategies**

- a) Elevate the visibility and comprehension of the SFCA’s mission and serve as a central resource for connecting community arts programming and events.
- b) Develop a strategic communications plan and toolkit to build transparency and strengthen stakeholder engagement.
- c) Grow partnerships with local media outlets (print, radio, and digital) to feature regular Arts Spotlights—interviews with local artists, reviews of exhibitions, and commentary on the relevance of art and culture to current events.
- d) Collaborate state-wide with non-arts centric organizations (e.g., hospitals, civic groups, local businesses) to integrate art and culture into areas like wellness, urban, development, and social services.
- e) Support and commission public art installations in neighborhoods on all islands to make art a visible, integral part of the daily environment.
- f) Collaborate with small, local rural museums and cultural/historical societies – especially those on neighbor islands – offering assistance with preservation, conservation, research, and grant-writing to help them sustain and grow their own local efforts.
- g) In partnership with island communities, support the creation of community-governed multimedia projects (e.g., interactive installations, digital archives) for each neighbor island that documents and celebrates its unique traditional and contemporary arts ecosystem.
- h) Host regular community listening sessions and forums to gather direct feedback, ensuring programs are responsive to the community’s evolving needs and stories.

## Ho'okanu

### **OBJECTIVE 4.1.** STRENGTHEN THE PERFORMING ARTS (ENSURE THAT THIS IS PRESENT THROUGHOUT)

#### **Strategies**

- a) Establish a task force to assess and support the needs of the performing arts community across the state.
- b) Invite performing artists (hālau hula, actors, dancers, poets, musicians) to serve as interpretive collaborators who develop new works responding to and within the visual art galleries, making the space itself a stage.
- c) Produce and host online content (podcasts, web series) featuring artists, stage crews, and composers to demystify the creative process and drive digital engagement.
- d) Seek new revenue streams (e.g., federal, foundation, private donor) and engage community partners to grow support for the performing arts. Dedicate funds to subsidize travel and accommodation for arts groups performing in underserved or rural communities outside of the Honolulu metropolitan area.

## Ho'okanu

### **OBJECTIVE 4.2.** DEVELOP NEW CREATIVES AND BROADER PARTICIPATION

#### **Strategies**

- a) Design and deliver a variety of programming, such as artist residencies, community projects, public events, and culturally diverse exhibitions and performances, to support a wide range of artistic expressions.
- b) Foster new artistic expression and expand audience engagement by strategically adopting emerging technologies, including AI and immersive platforms, to streamline administrative functions and launch innovative digital programs that lower barriers to entry and engagement for new participants.
- c) Offer workshops and mentorship designed to develop the creative skills needed for the modern economy (e.g., eco-friends design, digital design, architecture, videography, podcasting), positioning the SFCA as a talent incubator.
- d) Enhance Behind-the-Scenes Transparency: Post frequent, unpolished content that showcases the real labor of creatives and staff—artists at work, conservation, installation struggles—which satisfies the desire for authenticity and demystifies the creative process.
- e) Partner with organizations (e.g., architects, environmental science groups, legal aid organizations, or technology startups) to create programs where artists and technologists co-create solutions or new forms of expression.
- f) Continue to digitize collections—artifacts, manuscripts, and artwork—and add to the SFCA's free, searchable online databases. This gives rural/remote students, researchers, and local historical societies access to state heritage without travel.

## Ho'okanu

### **OBJECTIVE 4.3.** STRENGTHEN AND DISSEMINATE ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR AI USE IN THE ARTS

#### **Strategies**

- a) Task the Working Group with reviewing and potentially disseminating the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA) AI resources and professional development offerings related to copyright and compensation.
- b) Host workshops or public forums, led by subject-matter experts, focused on exploring and addressing how AI models are trained on artists' work and the lack of compensation or intellectual property rights for the original human creators.
- c) Consider developing policies and guidelines for grants, competitions, and exhibitions to address the use of AI tools in art creation and ensuring transparency around authorship.
- d) Explore how to support artists who are working with technology (tech-centered artists) and addressing the ethical issues around data privacy and AI.
- e) Engage with state lawmakers to inform them of the unique needs and risks facing the arts sector related to AI, particularly regarding intellectual property and artist protections.
- f) Monitor and respond to state legislation concerning the use of AI, particularly as it impacts arts education, copyright, and creative sector employment.

## Acknowledgements

The SFCA gratefully acknowledges the dedicated service of the Board of Commissioners, the good guidance of the Strategic Planning Committee, and the tireless efforts of the SFCA staff. We also extend our deepest appreciation to the state-wide community stakeholders for their invaluable insights and the team at GUILD Consulting for their instrumental support throughout this process.

