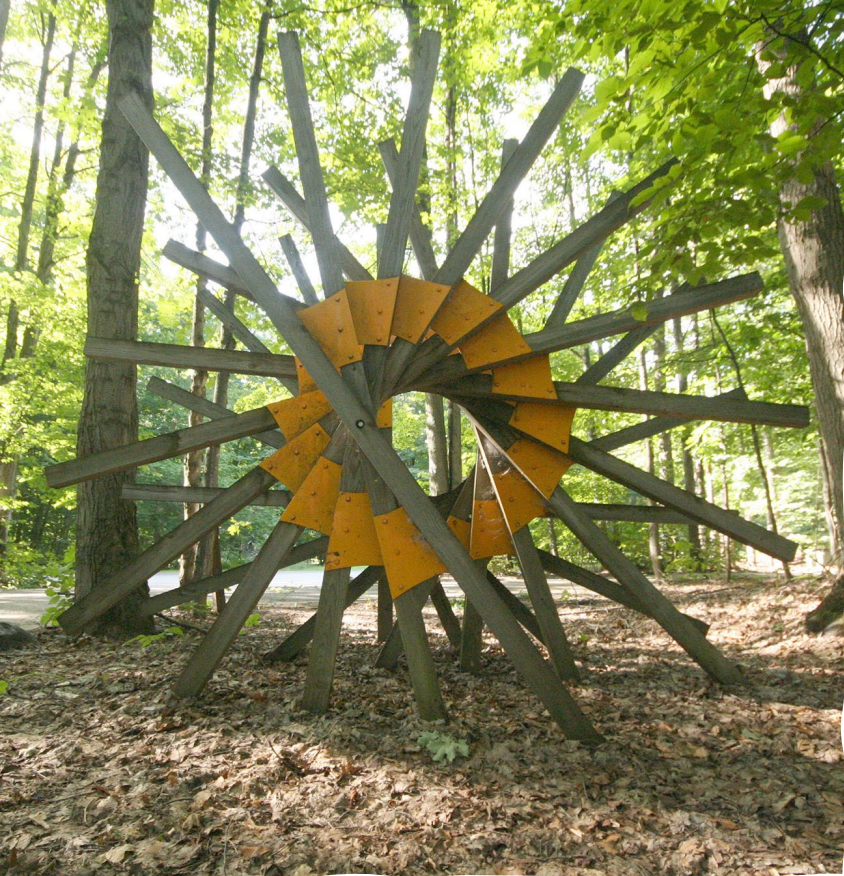


LISTEN. LEARN. FOCUS.

FRAMING THE NETWORK'S ROADMAP
SO ARTS + CULTURE + CREATIVITY THRIVE HERE

Jennifer H. Goulet, Consultant Partner
Northwest MI Arts & Culture Network



A BIT OF OVERVIEW

The lead regional voice + connector for arts + culture since 2015, the Northwest MI Arts & Culture Network is setting the stage for the next chapter of its work to help arts, culture + creativity thrive here. Thanks to Rotary Charities of Traverse City for its seed support!

- Invited to guide in framing the roadmap + setting priorities for Network 2.0.
- Grounded by a listening tour, inviting regional thought leaders, community leaders, and constituents like YOU to share perspectives, worries, opportunities, ideas + energy.
- Here to share learnings + invite your feedback so the Network can lean into priorities to help YOU grow + prosper.



THOUGHT LEADERS

What do Regional Community Leaders Think?

WHAT DID WE WANT TO KNOW?

- Get them thinking about what arts + culture mean to them AND how they see arts + culture contributing to their communities, the region, and their lives.
- How well is the Network + its mission known? Is its leadership recognized? Valued?
- How can the Network strengthen its strategic position as a regional leader? Collaborative partner? Trusted go-to?
- Where might there be opportunities for the Network and its members to bring leadership, unique voices/talents, added value in addressing regional challenges?
- Building awareness. Inviting advice. Cultivating partners. Building trust + opportunities for engagement.

WHO WE TALKED TO...

Cross-section of regional leaders + sectors with focus groups/surveys still to come...

- Casey Cowell + Emily Modrall, Boomerang Catapult
- Warren Call, Traverse Connect
- Trevor Tkach + Whitney Warra, Traverse City Tourism
- David Mengebier, Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation
- Sakura Takano + Kristin Hettich, Rotary Charities of Traverse City
- Nick Nissley, Northwestern Michigan College
- Christie Minervini, Sanctuary at Traverse City Commons
- Rick Schmitt, Stormcloud Brewing Company
- Robert Parker, Harvey Parker PLC
- Eric Roberts, 20Fathoms
- Holly T. Bird, Title Track
- Trey Devey, Interlochen
- Craig Hadley, Denos Museum Center
- Leslie Donaldson, Carnegie Mellon University
- Becky Lancaster, Art Rapids!

November 2021 - January 2022 - one-hour Zoom confidential interviews

WHAT DID WE ASK?

- Invited sharing of personal arts + cultural experiences + got a wealth of amazing stories!
- Asked how they'd describe the arts + cultural scene in their community and the region. Do people + community leaders value the importance of arts, culture + creativity?
- What's their familiarity with the Network and whether its mission/priorities/roles are understood?
- What barriers keep the Network + the sector from being taken seriously? Maximizing influence?
- What regional issues are opportunities for the arts, culture + creative sector to lead + contribute strategically?
- What advice do you give for the Network to build strategic influence in its next chapter? Willing to help?



WHAT WE HEARD

- Leaders believe that arts + culture are important to the vitality of the region. The Network is viewed as the lead champion + connector for YOU + with YOU.
- Unclear on Network role/priorities. See it as under-resourced + fragmented. Sharpen Network's focus + set priorities based on member needs to strategically build capacity.
- Core messaging, strategic priorities with measurable outcomes, and a phased business plan should be framed to build influence + capacity as goals are met.
- Regional issues where sector can play role - affordable housing, workforce, talent attraction/retention, mental health (esp. youth), diversity/inclusion, cultural awareness.
- Ready + willing partners to cultivate as advisors, partners, investors.



DOES THIS RESONATE WITH YOU?

Thoughts? Any Surprises?

FOCUS GROUPS

What do Peers + Community Leaders Think?

WHAT DID WE WANT TO KNOW?

- Opportunity to broaden regional input - with artists and arts + cultural leaders AND community leaders.
- Additional layer of listening to community leaders around same themes as thought leader interviews.
- Invitation to the Network's arts + cultural community - members/prospective members - to share opportunities, needs, where support + leadership is most needed. What must the Network do to help YOU thrive?
- What does the Network and its members need to know or change to strengthen its regional leadership?

WHO WE TALKED TO...

FEBRUARY + MARCH 2022

- 3 sessions with YOU - artists, arts + cultural organization leaders, creative practitioners, including the March Member Roundtable.
- 3 blended sessions with Community Stakeholders + YOU
- 65 total participants.
- One-hour facilitated conversations on Zoom.

WHAT DID WE ASK?

- What are the biggest challenges facing your organization or practice? What do you need to thrive?
- How does the Network serve you? What programs/services are most valuable to you?
- Is the Network seen as "the leader" for the sector? What keeps it from being taken seriously? Maximizing influence?
- What regional issues are opportunities for the arts, culture + creative sector to lead + contribute strategically?
- What advice do you offer to the Network to maximize its strategic influence in its next chapter?
- How can you lend support or leverage capacity/resources or share talent to help move the needle for the arts, culture + creativity across the region?



THE NETWORK - ADVOCATE. CONNECTOR. CONVENER.

YOU value the Network as lead advocate, connector, convener + communicator.

The Network is recognized as the lead champion for arts + culture and the source for info, resources, opportunities + connections. YOU suggested lots of ideas for needed programs + services -- diversity/inclusion training, audience re-engagement, dialogue on shared issues, leadership transition, funding, community partnerships, board development...

DOES THIS RESONATE?

WHAT DO YOU NEED MOST SO YOUR CREATIVE PRACTICE/ORGANIZATION CAN THRIVE HERE?





DEEPEN CONNECTIONS + MAKE ARTISTS A PRIORITY

Everyone wants + sees opportunities to be more connected. Artists feel especially disconnected. We need to build stronger + collaborative connections with peers, between Artists + Organizations, and with the Community.

Artists are foundational to building regional awareness, commitment and investment in arts, culture and creativity. We should prioritize investment + support + leadership opportunities for Artists.

WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUILDING CONNECTIONS + ARTIST SERVICES?





SHARPEN YOUR FOCUS + SHOW WHY IT MATTERS TO ALL OF US

The Network should sharpen its priorities to build awareness, influence + capacity. Community leaders urged the Network to sharpen its priorities and core messaging and engage members in coordinated awareness building + case-making. YOU agreed + got excited to showcase the diversity of arts + culture here. Business development leaders see opportunities to collaborate, lend supportive services + gain value by engaging US.



WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET YOUR COMMUNITY LEADERS TO LISTEN, ENGAGE + TAKE ACTION TO PRIORITIZE ARTS, CULTURE + CREATIVITY?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What's different in your community, the region, your creative practice or organization if WE are wildly successful?

EVERYONE SEES ARTS + CULTURE AS VITAL TO THE REGION.
THE NETWORK IS SEEN AS THE LEADER
TO MAKE IT HAPPEN WITH YOU.

A perfect stage for the work ahead.

ONLINE SURVEYS

It's what's up next...



2 SURVEYS. MORE LISTENING.

- Arts, culture + creative sector survey to help the Network understand the challenges and opportunities facing artists, makers, designers, arts and cultural organizations, creative entrepreneurs + businesses in this stage of post-pandemic recovery.
- Community survey to help the Network understand community interests and engagement in the arts, culture and creative programs/experiences. Does the community value the arts + culture and see it as essential?
- Online survey launches May 6th thru May 27th. WE need YOU to TAKE + SHARE it!



NEXT STEPS...

MAY + JUNE 2022

- Building Artist Connections: Community, Organizations, Each Other - Breakout Session at 1:15pm
- Online survey launches May 6. Take it + Share it!
- Report + recommendations to Network Board to set stage for strategic planning/priority setting
- Potential for Work Groups -- i.e., core message framing + collaborative sector showcase
- Final grant reporting to Rotary Charities of TC by June 30th. Thank you for this generous support!

EVERYONE SEES ARTS + CULTURE AS VITAL TO THE REGION.
THE NETWORK IS SEEN AS THE LEADER
TO MAKE IT HAPPEN WITH YOU.

How will YOU show up + take action?

THANK YOU



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