

# SVCREATES 3-Year Strategic Framework

## Refresh June 2020

**Vision:** A vibrant community fueled by a dynamic and diverse arts and culture ecosystem

**Mission:** Accelerating Silicon Valley's creative culture

**Goals:**

- Build the capacity of our arts and culture ecosystem
- Raise the visibility and voices of our creative sector
- Increase access to the arts for high need communities
- Model best practices for organizational health, collaborative leadership and diversity, equity and inclusion

**Target**

**Markets:**

*Primary:* Silicon Valley's ecosystem of 'creatives' with special emphasis on arts organizations with <\$2M in revenue in Santa Clara County

*Secondary:* Silicon Valley opinion leaders and consumers of the arts, mostly indirectly

**Values:**

- *Community* - creating a sense of belonging and shared emotional connection
- *Integrity* – living our word
- *Creativity* - stimulating our imagination and inspiring our future
- *Joy* - nurturing delight and well being
- *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* – engaging and welcoming all while prioritizing a level playing field

**Beliefs:** The arts:

- Have the power to heal, transform lives and drive social change
- Connect us to our heritage, humanity and each other
- Help shape and define our community
- Fuel creativity, innovation, and self-expression
- Are vital to our social and economic well-being
- Are integral to the healthy development of our children

**Role:** Venture culturist – resource builder, investor, incubator and steward

**Operating Principles:**

- *Lead by example.* We demonstrate leadership, courage, creativity and resiliency.
- *Embrace innovation.* We are calculated risk takers and open to new ideas and ways of doing things. We experiment and learn from our mistakes.
- *Live at the intersection of possibility and pragmatism.* We dream big, exude optimism and envision a better future, while taking achievable steps forward.
- *Build our team equal to our aspirations.* We attract and nurture a board, staff and partners with the commitment and collective capacity to move us forward.
- *Do the right thing.* We use common sense and integrity to leverage our resources to do what is right.

## CURRENT SITUATION:

**What we know about national trends in the arts:** Technology and demographic shifts are key disrupters. Large legacy organizations are contracting while small and start up multicultural projects and organizations are growing in number, not necessarily size. There is a strong emphasis on equitable funding and access to the arts while the lines are blurring between “not for profit” organizations and creative entrepreneurs. Digital culture is changing the ways in which the arts are produced and consumed.

**What we know about being in the arts in Silicon Valley:** We live in a scrappy start-up culture dominated by engineers and entrepreneurs who, within a few decades, changed the world through technology and innovation. *We are not a traditional “marketplace” for the arts.* Our phenomenal economic success makes our job market the envy of most regions, creates a tremendous amount of wealth, and attracts talent from across the globe while straining our transportation systems, driving up housing costs and widening the income gap. *This is a difficult place to live as an artist or for anyone not directly tied to the success of our technology industries.* Our growing sea of “new money” and global philanthropists makes raising money locally harder as new wealth finds its way and global causes and opportunities prevail. *We have one of the most challenging fundraising climates in the US.* Our cultural diversity and evolving digital culture makes building audiences more complex because they want to curate their own, and often culturally specific, experiences. *Relevance trumps excellence when it comes to the arts.* And lastly, our breadth of diversity, culture of churn and suburban development pattern makes creating a sense of place and community more difficult. *There are several powerful forces that divide us, while the arts connect us.*

**What we know about our arts ecosystem:** We are a highly distributed network of several hundred small multicultural organizations and projects fueled largely by volunteers. What differentiates us from other US regions is that: 1) by national standards, we have no large arts organizations; 2) a high percentage of our ecosystem identifies cultural heritage as a primary focus; 3) our ecosystem reports a higher percentage of revenue from earned income; and 4) the majority of philanthropy leaves our region. We are undercapitalized, broadly diverse, scrappy, but also collaborative, industrious, determined and nimble.

**What makes SVC unique and relevant:** What makes SVC unique is our venture culturist approach to strengthening the ecosystem through our investments, partnerships and business planning. What makes us relevant is our ability to strengthen an evolving ecosystem that builds community, fosters cross-cultural understanding, creates “place” and contributes to civic dialog and problem solving.

**What we know and believe to be the impact of the 2020 Pandemic:** Before the pandemic all industries, including the arts, were impacted by consumers’ appetite for *experiences*. That has not changed. But COVID-19 severely impacted our sector’s mission of bringing people together in shared settings and pummeled our basic business model of “paying customers plus donor investment”. The sector quickly pivoted to online content and experiences, which helped to stay connected with audiences, donors and students but did not pay the bills and at a time that philanthropy rallied around “basic needs”. In the long term, the sector will learn to monetize some virtual offerings but it will not replace our human need to gather, a need that will only grow as technology becomes more ubiquitous. And lastly, the uneven impact of the pandemic on communities of color has emphasized the importance of considering racial equity in our decision-making processes.

**Why our proposed strategies make sense to us:** Our strategies embrace who we are, respond to the challenges facing our ecosystem, leverage our strengths, build on momentum and define and demonstrate our “venture culturist” role within this sobering moment in our history. Change comes, however, when society is faced with a “burning platform” which we now have, and our leadership matters more than ever.

## KEY STRATEGIES:

**Goal #1:** Build the capacity of our arts and culture ecosystem

- **Capacity Strategy # 1:** Align current and future SVC programs and offerings with a defined set of values and critical success factors for strengthening our ecosystem.
- **Capacity Strategy # 2:** Champion the establishment of arts spaces to meet the needs of our arts ecosystem
- **Capacity Strategy # 3:** Explore and establish a network of shared business services for our arts ecosystem

**Measurements:** Portfolio trends, participation levels, customer survey tools, collection of anecdotal stories, impact of distributed model of spaces, services.

**Goal #2:** Raise the visibility and voices of our Creative Sector

- **Visibility Strategy # 1:** Broaden distribution of Content across all channels.
- **Visibility Strategy # 2:** Advocate for specific public policies impacting our local arts.
- **Visibility Strategy # 3:** Develop an annual arts index and companion thought pieces.

**Measurements:** Growth in Content subscriptions, social media, and events participation, specific outcomes of advocacy work and development and reach of Arts Index.

**Goal #3:** Increase access to arts and creativity for high-need communities

- **Accessibility Strategy #1:** Cultivate institutional partners capable of scaling arts accessibility for high need communities.
- **Accessibility Strategy #2:** Leverage ArtsEdConnect marketplace to expand and deepen opportunities for Title I schools to engage in the arts.
- **Accessibility Strategy #3:** Create funding opportunities that encourage our arts ecosystem to develop and expand their programs for high need communities.

**Measurements:** Number of children and adults served, hours of instruction per child, number of artists and arts organizations participating, dollar amount of investment in Arts Access grants.

**Goal #4: Model best practices** for organizational health, collaborative leadership and diversity, equity and inclusion.

- **Organizational Strategy #1:** Deepen our regional impact by expanding our programmatic reach, resource allocations and relationships across Santa Clara County.
- **Organizational Strategy #2:** Enroll institutional funders in the development, growth and on-going support of SVC grants and programs and one time support for special initiatives.
- **Organizational Strategy #3:** Apply DEI lens and financial best practices to every decision we make.

**Measurements:** Financial dashboard, growth in operating reserve, DEI metrics across capacity, visibility and accessibility, number of collaborative partners, dollars raised for SVCultural Fund, distribution of resources.

# KEY OBJECTIVES:

## Goal #1: Build the capacity of our arts and culture ecosystem

**Strategy #1:** Align all current and future SVC capacity building programs and offerings with a defined set of values and critical success factors for strengthening our ecosystem.

**Objectives:**

- Use results of 2020 Research Update and 2020 DEI Assessment to refine values and success factors
- Develop and benchmark measurements of success for existing programs
- Modify curriculum offerings and grant programs to align with success factors & sector needs and DEI lens

**Strategy #2:** Champion the establishment of art spaces to meet the needs of the arts ecosystem

**Objectives:**

- Develop a suite of possible solutions for displaced arts organizations and artists
- Promote value of arts to local municipalities and ensure that arts space developments align with local priorities

**Strategy #3:** Explore and establish network of shared services for the arts ecosystem

**Objectives:**

- Launch pilot shared business services network (ArtsWeb)
- Support development of qualified fiscal sponsorship programs for Santa Clara County artists and arts groups

## Goal #2: Raise the Visibility and Voices of our Creative Sector

**Strategy # 1:** Broaden distribution of Content across all channels.

**Objectives:**

- Increase number of subscribers from ~3,000 to 10,000 by offering a suite of distribution incentives for partners connected to select audiences.
- Explore and test earned income opportunities that leverage access to Content’s subscriber base of “cultural consumers”.
- Grow the number of “high value” partner organizations who will sponsor the “community benefit” of Content publications and events (eg Office of Cultural Affairs)

**Strategy # 2:** Publish an Annual Arts Index

**Objectives:**

- Leverage Ecosystem Research Refresh and other national and regional research studies to determine indicators
- Gain insights and buy in by enrolling arts ecosystem leaders in the process.
- Use Content platform and other media channels, CEO blog, Annual Report, genARTS, and hosted gatherings to elevate the conversation and spark companion thought pieces.

**Strategy # 3:** Advocate for specific public policies impacting local arts

**Objectives:**

- Determine public policy opportunities of great value and importance to our local arts ecosystem
- Build coalition networks aligned with proposed policy changes

- Use Content platform, CEO blog, public testimony, speaking engagements and Annual Report to educate, promote and share results

**Goal #3:** Increase access to arts and creativity for high-need communities

**Strategy #1:** Cultivate institutional partners capable of scaling arts accessibility for high need communities.

**Objectives:**

- Complete arts infused renovation of Women and Children’s Center at VMC
- Develop and launch on-going “arts programming” for VMC
- Conduct annual environmental scan of “institutional partner” pipeline for potential incubation

**Strategy #2:** Leverage ArtsEdConnect marketplace to expand and deepen opportunities for Title I schools to engage in the arts.

**Objectives:** In partnership with SCCOE;

- Deepen our understanding of the programming needs of Title I Schools
- Increase the number of arts partners with quality programming and the capacity and cultural competency to serve high need communities
- Double the number of Title I Schools participating in arts programming

**Strategy #3:** Create funding opportunities that encourage our arts ecosystem to develop and expand their programs for high-need communities

**Objectives:**

- Engage Equity Advisory Council and Institutional partners in the recruitment of artists or arts organizations participating in Arts Access grants.
- Enroll new partners in identifying and helping to reach new high need populations
- Double our investment in arts organizations competing for “Access” grants serving high need communities.

**Goal #4:** Model best practices for organizational health, collaborative leadership and diversity, equity and inclusion.

**Strategy #1:** Expand our programmatic reach, resource allocations and relationships across Santa Clara County to deepen our regional impact.

**Objectives:**

- Develop research-based matrix of arts ecosystem data, public policies and funding within each Santa Clara County city or town.
- Meet with leaders from every municipality in Santa Clara County, get to know their creative sector needs and determine opportunities for working together.
- Sign a Memo of Understanding with interested jurisdictions matching municipal interest and need with SVC programs and initiatives.

**Strategy #2:** Enroll institutional funders in the development, growth and on-going support of SVC grants and programs and one time support for special initiatives.

**Objectives:**

- Create SVCultural Fund with \$2M in start up funding and a goal of adding \$1M to annual operations funding plus one time funding for special initiatives from existing or new institutional (government, foundations, corporations) funders.

- Develop and test a menu of investment opportunities with existing portfolio of institutional investors. (eg Packard, Hewlett, SCC, SCCOE, City of San Jose, Applied Materials)
- Attract 5 new institutional annual investors to the Fund.

**Strategy #3:** Apply DEI lens and financial best practices to every decision we make.

**Objectives:**

- Develop DEI implementation plan and performance dashboard based on Equity Arts recommendations.
- Add DEI lens to Decision Making Rubric and use Rubric tool to help determine any major changes to SVC programs or initiatives (add/change/delete).
- Budget annual increases to operating reserve.