

# INDEPENDENT ARTS & MEDIA

## **Three-Year Strategic Plan 2014–2016**

*Including financial, board development, strategic communication, and affiliate programming goals.*

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*The Independent Arts & Media 2014-2016 Strategic Plan was produced  
collaboratively by the IAM Board of Directors*

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## **1 – Mission & Vision**

The mission of Independent Arts & Media (“IAM”) is to support independent, non-commercial art and media projects and producers for the purpose of cultivating community, civic participation, cultural engagement, and free expression.

Through fiscal sponsorship, IAM builds community and horizontal networks to facilitate resource sharing, program collaboration, and audience and community development. We partner strategically with other nonprofit organizations that share our values and goals for using media, journalism, art, and culture to inform and empower public participation in our democratic society.

Our ultimate vision is to strengthen a culture of democracy by cultivating arts and media projects that engage neighbors in civic life.

## **2 – Services**

IAM’s services empower independent projects and producers doing significant work while lacking infrastructure and support from commercial and mainstream institutions.

### **Fiscal Sponsorship: An Infrastructure Platform**

- IAM uses fiscal sponsorship as a transformative “free-speech platform” that helps our affiliates build individual-donor communities, receive grants and gifts from philanthropic and institutional supporters, develop critical skills in fundraising and program development, and establish relationships with government agencies.
- As of 2016, IAM provided fiscal sponsorship for over 60 affiliates dedicated to non-commercial work in media and the arts, including publishing, theater, dance, music, visual art, film and video, journalism, history, and public-events production.
- Since 2010, IAM has doubled its charitable fund to earning over \$500,000 in grants and individual gifts dedicated to the success of our sponsored affiliates.

### **Community Development: New Networks for Independent Producers**

- In 2013, IAM began using cohort-based strategies for professional and community development programs to build shared skill sets and collaborative relationships over time between our affiliates and the public.
- The IAM Board of Directors is in the process of initiating a regular event series to showcase our affiliate projects, build collective presence and visibility, inspire

public engagement, and raise funding. This program builds on IAM's history of staging diverse expositions, workshops, conferences, panels, and public events.

### 3 — Values Statement

At the outset of our strategic planning process, the IAM Board identified five values to guide our discussions and the future of IAM:

- ***Cooperation and Networks:*** By building visibility, exposure, access, and connections for itself and its affiliates, IAM can create new horizontal networks for sharing resources, accessing audiences, serving communities, and spurring participation.
- ***Capacity:*** IAM and its sponsored affiliates require strong and effective infrastructure to compete and stay viable in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- ***Sustainability:*** Resilient, mission-driven revenue streams and efficient, cost-effective operational design are the foundation of long-term success for IAM and its affiliates.
- ***Space & Curation:*** IAM will cultivate virtual and physical space to increase productivity, presentation, dialogue, collaboration, exchange, sharing, and serendipity between its affiliates, funders, supporters, and the general public.
- ***Transparency and Accountability:*** IAM's reputation and role as a steward of charitable funding and resources on behalf of our affiliates, and its status as an IRS-recognized nonprofit public charity, require the highest degree of transparency and accountability in its financial operations and programmatic services.

IAM achieves these values through:

- Deconstructing categories,
- Engaging the nonprofit media and arts sectors to advance and advocate for its sponsorship model and affiliates,
- Providing organizational and operational integrity,
- Facilitating open inquiry and free expression,
- Championing diverse voices in a pluralistic society,

- Advancing community curation and a participatory culture, and
- Encouraging workforce development and the creation of economic, social, and civic value for non-commercial media and the arts.

## 4 — Situation Statement

IAM was founded in 2000 as a positive, constructive reaction by local artists and journalists to the evictions, cultural commodification, and community-wide disenfranchisement that came on the heels of the first Dot-com boom in the San Francisco Bay Area.

For the first ten years of its existence, IAM was managed by a large community of volunteers. They built a vibrant array of accessible, affordable media and arts services, including public events such as the annual *Expo for the Artist & Musician* and publishing programs such as the award-winning journalism project *Newsdesk.org*.

In 2010, IAM entered a challenging period of leadership transition and organizational evolution that saw most of its events and publishing programs shut down. These changes set the stage for what has become an exciting period of organizational redesign and renewal.

Four years later, IAM has emerged as a unique nonprofit fiscal sponsor and civil-society agent that facilitates the use of media and the arts as powerful tools for social empowerment. Our sponsorship services are seeing an increasing demand by independent producers and artists, who leverage our administrative efficiencies to focus on their own productivity and community development.

As a result of this transition, IAM has achieved a potent combination of effective and efficient administration, engaged leadership from the Board of Directors, robust income growth, and visionary collaborative planning.

However, our transition is not yet complete and major milestones still lay ahead.

- IAM's operational budget must be increased to approximately \$100,000 to fund an executive stipend and part-time Affiliate Program Manager position. This growth will be achieved by diversifying our current funding sources and increasing foundation and individual donor contributions as well as fiscal sponsorship revenue.
- In order to scale to this level and beyond, IAM has committed to a major systems upgrade that can automate and facilitate the most complex aspects of the fiscal sponsorship relationship. This includes the design and implementation of a

comprehensive CRM system that will require significant fundraising to implement.

- IAM is committed to the success of its fiscally sponsored affiliates as a means of advancing our mission and supporting the greater community we serve. The success of our affiliates also ensures our own survival by deepening our sustainability through increased administrative fees. As a first step, IAM is conducting a thorough assessment of administrative, operational, and programmatic services which IAM may provide in the future.
- An important component of increasing IAM's role and visibility as a facilitator of dialogue in our community is the development of a comprehensive Strategic Communications Plan to help us reach a greater audience, promote our affiliates, and reinforce our connections with affiliates, donors, and the public at large. As initial steps, we will re-brand IAM with a new logo and website design and implement a cohesive social media strategy to increase IAM's reach.

With the successful completion of this Strategic Plan, new prospects may open up for local-to-national partnerships and network development, coalitions or alliances, but which remain beyond the scope of this plan.

Most importantly, IAM and its partners will have designed and demonstrated a powerful new model for nonprofit management and media/arts administration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **5 — Accomplishments**

### **2014 & 2015 Financial Accomplishments:**

- Complete financial review with CPA firm Bedinger & Co.
- Develop implementation plan for revised accounting and bookkeeping system
- Identify documents to enhance financial transparency and post on IAM website
- Implement annual budget procedures to ensure early completion, accurate forecasting, and the identification of specific fundraising goals
- Implement internal oversight system for financial procedures

### **2014 & 2015 Fundraising Accomplishments:**

- Develop and implement Fundraising Plan
- Plan and host semi-annual fundraisers, including co-host Affiliate showcase events
- Research and compile list of IAM past donors and foundation grantors

- Identify specific fundraising targets based on known expenses, such as Executive stipend, office rent and CRM expenses
- Develop grant strategy, including assessment of specific funding needs

#### **2014 & 2015 Operational Accomplishments:**

- Evaluate and select CRM system based on identification of CRM needs
- Complete CRM Implementation Plan
- Secure new office space at the Pacific Felt Factory with access to greater community resources such as gallery and event space and networking opportunities

#### **2014 & 2015 Fiscal Sponsorship Program Accomplishments:**

- Conduct market survey of other fiscal sponsorship organizations' services and fees
- Create system for regular and timely communications with Affiliates
- Finalize revisions to Affiliate Policy Manual
- Develop and implement Board Liaison Program
- Create digital IAM Affiliate Archive
- Assess Affiliate evaluation and reporting systems
- Develop implementation plan for new Affiliate services and resources

#### **2014 & 2015 Communication Accomplishments:**

- Develop comprehensive Strategic Communications Plan
- Draft and distribute "State of IAM" publication
- Create new IAM logo with comprehensive Style Guide, including template business cards and letterhead
- Launch new IAM website
- Refine IAM branding and message to focus on mission, services and values

#### **2014 & 2015 Board Development Accomplishments:**

- Complete Founder transition
- Recruit 2 new Board members, prioritizing financial management skills, fundraising experience, and racial and cultural diversity
- Create Board Orientation Packet



## 6 – Goals

### **2016 Financial & Fundraising Goals:**

- Fundraise and institute executive stipend
- Complete implementation of scalable accounting and bookkeeping system
- Complete documenting financial and oversight procedures
- Prepare for FY2016 audit with CPA firm
- Draft internal “Case Statement” document
- Identify specific fundraising targets based on known FY2017 expenses
- Assess options for a new bank that is consistent with IAM’s organizational values and steps required to change banks

### **2016 Operation & Fiscal Sponsorship Program Goals:**

- Conduct financial analysis of Affiliate programming and fundraising activities
- Conduct cost analysis of IAM’s fiscal sponsorship services relative to Affiliate programming and fundraising activities
- Develop and implement outreach plan for Affiliate recruitment
- Continue implementation of CRM system, including integration of communications into CRM system
- Draft clear criteria for accepting Model A vs. Model C Affiliates
- Develop and implement Social Media Strategy