

AGNES ETHERINGTON ART CENTRE AT QUEEN'S

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2019

MANDATE

The Agnes Etherington Art Centre is a research-intensive art museum that serves as an active educational resource at Queen's University and as a public gallery for the Kingston community and beyond. By collecting and preserving works of art, exhibiting and interpreting visual culture, and fostering and disseminating research, the Agnes illuminates the great artistic traditions of the past and the innovations of the present. Its work is driven by the belief that encounters with original works of art contribute to understanding the world and ourselves.

MISSION

The Agnes Etherington Art Centre:

- advances the academic mission and priorities of Queen's University. Through proactive and responsive engagement with students, faculty and staff, we create opportunities for curricular and co-curricular experiential learning, and for scholarly research in visual art and museology. In all its work as an art museum and a welcoming social hub, the Agnes enhances campus life, as well as the public profile, creative leadership and distinction of the university. It provides a vital meeting place and connection point between Queen's and the world.
- serves as the public art gallery of Kingston and southeastern Ontario, showcasing high achievement and providing access to renowned artists and specialists, emergent forms of expression and the transformative power of visual art. The Agnes contributes to social cohesion and a dynamic civic identity.
- is locally anchored, nationally engaged and globally connected. Our immediate context is a constant touchstone and point of reference. At the same time, the gallery participates in wide networks of affiliation through outreach programs, residencies, publications, collection loans, traveling exhibitions, online presence, and collaborative projects and exchange.
- builds and sustains the physical integrity and the intellectual and cultural value of its significant art collections. Key collections are held in contemporary art, historical Canadian art and historical European art, with smaller concentrations of African art, Indigenous art, historical dress and decorative art. These diverse collections crossing historical periods and cultures support specialist, emerging, intra- and inter-disciplinary research and practices.
- nurtures visual literacy, critical thinking, contemplation, and participation in the creative life of the community. Agnes Etherington Art Centre programs embrace cultural diversity, foster discourse and inspire engaged citizenship.
- aspires to excellence in all facets of its work, guided by professional best-practice standards.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Drawing on the recommendations of the 2013 External Review Report, five strategic goals will guide the work of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre through 2015–2019, as follows:

1. Enhance the artistic vision of programs and collections;
2. Enhance the Agnes' contributions to Queen's University's academic mission, research and strategic goals, including programs that support student wellness;
3. Increase effective engagement of and interrelationship with the community;
4. Build the Agnes' national and global networks, profile and presence; and
5. Develop human and financial resources to ensure sustainable fulfillment of the Mission and Mandate.

These goals are interwoven and mutually reinforcing, and can be pursued in tandem over the next three to five years.

ACTION PLAN

1. **Enhance the artistic vision of programs and collections.**

The quality and coherence of artistic vision is at the core of our work as a visual arts institution. As these are enhanced, we build creative innovations in program content and delivery, and focus our collections, as follows:

- (a) The quality of the work we do and present will be matched by effective articulation and communication of these to increase media-coverage and rates of participation.
- (b) New methods of internal program-development processes will be established to ensure currency, measureable critical standards, creative value, complementarity, integrity, and sensitivity to context.
- (c) Support staff development and research to deepen and update skills, build informed networks and foster connections across disciplines. Such work will sharpen the distinguishing character of the Agnes' programs.
- (d) Program and collections development will build on identified strengths, benefiting from concentration on key initiatives to create a powerful, coherent public profile.

2. **Enhance contributions to Queen's University's academic mission and strategic goals.**
 - (a) A clear first step is to seek support to create a new position to focus on academic engagement to increase contributions to curricular learning.
 - (b) Expand and formalize experiential learning; e.g., recognize the structured training received by volunteer docents, and/or scale up current practica.
 - (c) Act as a portal for Queen's faculty, students and programs to national and international networks.
 - (d) Realise the intentions of the Queen's National Scholar position in Indigenous Art as a model for the integration with Agnes' programs collections and expertise.
 - (e) Expand co- and extra-curricular activities and opportunities, with an emphasis on programs designed to enhance student wellness.

3. **Increase effective engagement of and interrelationship with the community.**
 - (a) Increase the gallery's meaningful engagement with the gallery's artistic context through exhibitions, programs, opportunities for dialogue and teaching/learning.
 - (b) Intensify and build networks and collaborations with art and non-art groups.
 - (c) Increase instruction offerings in visual art creation skills and appreciation.
 - (d) Increase programs for families to become a favoured destination for participation.
 - (e) Cultivate multi-generational, multi-disciplinary, and cross-cultural linkages.
 - (f) Increase the welcoming social amenities of the Agnes through a destination café, improved visitor seating, improved signage and interpretive material, and accessible design.
 - (g) Establish a new direct membership program and build new volunteer roles to expand opportunities for community involvement.

4. **Build the Agnes' national and global networks, profile and presence.**

Global and national outreach and impact will be built through:

 - (a) Digitization of the collection for searchable online public access to records and resources.
 - (b) Create an enhanced online research presence through enriched and inventive online postings on the website, in social media and on emerging platforms.
 - (c) Increase national and transnational collaborations and exchanges.

5. **Develop human and financial resources to ensure sustainable fulfillment of the Mission and Mandate.**
 - (a) Develop more effective tools for financial management.
 - (b) Secure new endowment funds.
 - (c) Pursue and attain new revenue sources such as foundations, community-based fundraising and revenue generation.
 - (d) Undertake a Feasibility Study to shape and explore a facility expansion/renewal project within 5–7 years.
 - (e) Increase the support staffing complement to better focus the work of specialized staff for example in communications/promotion, programs and collections.