



Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra 2023-2028 Strategic Plan

The performing arts are at a crossroads. The COVID-19 Pandemic has led to lower attendance numbers and a general hesitancy toward public engagement for arts organizations across the country. Simultaneously social and political forces have accelerated the polarization of our communities in ways that shape experiences in concert halls. Embracing diversity and inclusion as core values of our organization, we are committed to fostering a culture that engages meaningfully with diverse musicians, audiences, and community members through both community engagement and programming.

In addition, while the Philharmonic has shown financial losses for years, it presented its first balanced budget in 2021 and is positioned to continue to do the same going forward.

To that end, despite the above-stated challenges, the Binghamton Philharmonic has every reason to be successful.

Strategic Goal One: Financial and Organizational Sustainability

The Binghamton Philharmonic recognizes the need to maintain and grow its financial resources while also increasing revenue.

Objectives:

1. Continue to operate with balanced annual budgets.
 - a. Example 1: Develop a 5-year aspirational budget and review it annually.
2. Grow the Philharmonic's assets to achieve increasing levels of financial independence and resilience.
 - a. Example 1: Reestablish the restricted endowed chairs fund.
 - b. Example 2: Maintain and strengthen Fanfare for the Future legacy giving campaign with the goal of building investments.
3. Work with community leaders and stakeholders to understand and respond to the orchestra's place in the whole community,
 - a. Example 1: Work with community leaders from diverse cultures and ethnicities to develop programming that builds on our diversity
 - b. Example 2: Develop a leadership role in the performing arts community for the inclusiveness and diversity of our organization
4. Increase ticket revenue to be equal to or greater than concert-related expenses.

- a. Example 1: Through marketing and public engagement, increase the public's awareness of the Philharmonic, including specific efforts to attract Binghamton's diverse population to concerts and events.
 - b. Example 2: Price tickets strategically, using market research and budget goals.
 - c. Example 3: Continually develop goal-oriented ticketing, marketing, and sponsorship strategies.
 - d. Example 4: Create a Strategic Marketing Plan.
5. Maintain and develop fundraising activities that meet budgetary goals while also attracting patrons to Philharmonic performances.
 6. Maintain and develop sponsor relationships.
 - a. Example 1: Develop new audience-building sponsorship opportunities.
 - b. Example 2: Continually assess sponsorship benefits packages in consultation with sponsors.
 7. Create and implement staff, board, and committee succession plans, while working to retain staff, to better preserve institutional memory and ensure smooth leadership transitions.
 - a. Example 1: Review Philharmonic compensation packages annually and in concert with League of American Orchestras compensation reports.
 - b. Example 2: Create a succession playbook.

Strategic Goal Two: Artistic Excellence

The Binghamton Philharmonic will continually demonstrate a commitment to excellence in programming and musicianship.

Objectives:

1. Maintain a positive working relationship with Philharmonic musicians through effective Collective Bargaining Agreements and implementation of those agreements.
2. Retain current music director not only for artistic reasons, but also to maintain organizational consistency. Create and implement a succession plan (replacement, retention, and renewal) should the current music director depart.
3. Develop innovative programming that is unique to the Binghamton Philharmonic and representative of its diverse community.
 - a. Example 1: Actively reach out to targeted communities to hold events that foster lasting and meaningful relationships to enrich the culture of the Philharmonic and Binghamton.
 - b. Example 2: Establish celebrations such as Black History Month and Pride so that the Binghamton Philharmonic publicly affirms its commitments to justice for those particular historically marginalized groups.
4. Continue and accelerate current initiatives to perform the music of composers from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in concert halls.
 - a. Example 1: First priority would be to establish a process by which the Music Director, the Executive Director, and the EDI Committee work together to develop innovative, diverse, and inclusive programming.

- b. Example 2: By the conclusion of this strategic plan, the goal is to foster such a culture of inclusion and diversity that the need for accountability processes is obviated.
- 5. Maintain a commitment to the highest levels of symphonic culture and artistry.
- 6. Create pathways for diversity in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Strategic Goal Three: Community Engagement

The Binghamton Philharmonic will partner with the community in ways that increase awareness, appreciation, and stature of the Philharmonic and drive the community to Philharmonic performances and events.

Objectives:

1. The Philharmonic will create and implement educational and outreach initiatives that welcome all members of the community.
 - a. Example 1: Consider all new community engagement initiatives with regard to funding and sponsorships.
 - b. Example 2: Develop educational and outreach programs that are specifically designed around the ideals of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
 - c. Example 3: Continue to reach into underrepresented communities.
 - i. Develop and brand programming in conjunction with minority communities
 - d. Example 4: Develop new fundraisers and programs that welcome all members of the community, while examining existing programs to ensure that they, too, are welcoming to all members of the community.
2. The Philharmonic will create and implement educational programming designed for all segments of the community with the goal of building its audience.
 - a. Example 1: Develop educational programming with funding and sponsorships in mind.
 - b. Example 2: Develop educational programming and projects for non-musicians and amateur musicians, both young and old.
 - c. Example 3: Continue to provide educational outreach activities, such as school and senior community visits.
3. As a means to engage former board members, the Philharmonic will convene the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee at least annually.
 - a. Example 1: Call on the committee for assistance in building audience and community engagement.
 - b. Example 2: Rely on the committee as a compass for programming, feedback, and planning.
4. The Philharmonic board will be engaged with the community through participation in Philharmonic events.
 - a. Example 1: Continue to develop a board that best represents diversity across multiple dimensions, including age, gender, and ethnicity
 - b. Example 2: Continue to encourage gifts of time, talent, and treasure from board members.
 - c. Example 3: Engage in strategic plan-driven board recruitment.

Strategic Goal 4: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Binghamton Philharmonic realizes its responsibility to work for ever greater equity, diversity, and inclusion in the institution, the Binghamton community, and in classical music culture.

1. Work actively to address equity, diversity, and inclusion with regard to the organizational structure.
 - a. Example 1: Develop a more diverse and inclusive Board
 - b. Example 2: At every board meeting, one BPO committee will be offered the opportunity to bring in a speaker to discuss various topics related to the committee's initiatives. The Board President and Executive Director will set the agenda prior to the start of the 2023 fiscal year.
 - i. For example, it will be the EDI committee's responsibility to bring in a speaker to address training/enrichment on a topic(s) of their choice such as antibias education (gender bias, racism, etc.) either generally or specific to classical music culture, for the staff/board.
 - ii. It is suggested that each committee's topics be different each year.
2. Continue to provide more opportunities to BIPOC musicians.
3. Increased accountability for, or data gathering on, representation among composers on programs, and musicians in the orchestra
 - a. Example 1: Providing annual reports on representation among composers on programs and musicians in the orchestra, as well as comparable data from similar institutions, to the Executive Director and the Music Director.
4. Increasing accessibility and audience diversity
 - a. Example 1: Increasing racial and class diversity of audience in conjunction with innovative programming opportunities
 - b. Example 2: Increased accessibility to events for neurodivergent and disabled people
 - c. Example 3: Continuing to increase access to events for people with financial and/or social barriers to inclusion
5. Collaborate with community organizations who offer EDI resources and training/enrichment in industry to provide guidance.
 - a. Example 1: Reach out to organizations such as Binghamton University, Not-for Profits actively engaged in ending bias like the YWCA, The Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce, and our Corporate Sponsors for guidance in EDI-related work.
6. Become recognized for a proactive role in promoting diversity and inclusion and integrating these values into our corporate culture.

Postscript

This Strategic Plan is a "living document." To that end:

1. The Board and its Committees agree to review the document at least every six months in order to assure that goals are being met.
2. In consultation with the Board and its Committees, Board Officers have the authority to update/amend/modify the Strategic Plan throughout the plan period.
3. Revision dates will be annotated accordingly after each update to the Strategic Plan.