

# Velocity Strategic Action Plan 2018 – 2021

# HISTORY

Velocity's Strategic Planning process engaged more than 300 stakeholders during our city's most rapid period of social and economic change since the Klondike Gold Rush. By 2018, Seattle had become the fastest growing American city of the decade.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) 2017's determination of low income in the Seattle area is a \$50,400 annual salary. Our strategic planning survey, completed by 150+ artists and audiences, revealed that 40% of our constituency earn less than \$20,000 a year. During The Great Recession, nimble responsiveness and community collaboration were key to Velocity's survival and success. We again took this approach as our community faced a new economic crisis. With the cost of living quickly rising and affordable housing diminishing, we implemented some of our proposed strategic actions prior to finalizing the Strategic Plan. For example, the need for more subsidized rehearsal space was identified in our surveys. Could a Velocity satellite space help solve the problem? When the neighborhood Value Village was vacated and slated for demolition, Velocity seized the opportunity to try-out a strategic experiment. With a \$1 a year lease and support from the Seattle Mayor's Office, we created a pop-up dance space temporarily doubling the low-cost space we provided. We also didn't delay our commitment to equity and inclusion. By the time this Strategic Plan was written and approved one third of Velocity's weekly classes were taught by people of color, our Indigenous Land Acknowledgement was included in every program, and the growing diversity of Velocity's programming, artists, audiences and board was recognized by an Artsfund diversity award.

The Staff and Board also conducted one-on-one interviews with community leaders, a Competitive Field Analysis, and a financial analysis of every program before bringing a final version of the Strategic Plan to our community. In early spring 2018, I shared the Strategic Action Plan in an interactive community forum. Attendees gave it a unanimous thumbs-up.

Throughout the process there were also consistent findings: Velocity is recognized as Seattle's dance hub and national dance connector with excellence in programming, faculty, and leadership. It is valued as an incubator of innovative local artists, and for its two-pronged approach of investing in community inclusion while maintaining an internationally relevant curatorial eye. Our summer festivals, Strictly Seattle and the Seattle Festival of Dance Improvisation, continue to be identified as important to Seattle and the national dance field. We also heard loudly-and-clearly that our current home studios and theater are inadequate in size and function. And Velocity needs to continue to cultivate a more diverse and inviting culture that embraces partnerships and collaborations.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the surveys, interviews, retreats and community forums that created this responsive Strategic Action Plan to guide Velocity through its next transformative chapter.



Tonya Lockyer  
Artistic + Executive Director

## VELOCITY'S CORE VALUES

RELEVANCE | INNOVATION | EXCELLENCE  
| ACCESS | PLURALITY | PARTICIPATION |  
ADVOCACY | SUSTAINABILITY

## VELOCITY'S MISSION

Velocity advances contemporary dance and movement-based art by fostering the creative explorations of artists and audiences through an invested commitment to education, creation, performance, inquiry, community participation, and inter/national exchange.

## INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Velocity Dance Center is situated on the traditional territories of the **Coast Salish people.**

We respect the Coast Salish peoples of this land past, present and future and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout the Coast Salish diaspora.

We offer our care and gratitude to the land, water and air, and are committed to the support of Indigenous-led programming and Indigenous artistic practices.

# ACTION STATEMENT

Velocity is Seattle's premier art center dedicated to contemporary dance and performance. Every day we:

Support and advance artists and emerging ideas through commissioning, presenting, residencies, creative exchange; and access to space, funding, scholarships, employment and touring opportunities.

Provide quality movement education to dancers beginner through professional, in a broad range of movement styles.

Produce programs that introduce audiences to a wide spectrum of contemporary dance practices and aesthetics and bring together regional talent and world-class innovators.

Provide outreach and humanities programs that engage minds and inspire participation, while promoting cross-disciplinary dialogue and meaningful links between artists and the community.

Advocate for dance as an essential component to the cultural vitality of the country.

““

**I can not overstate  
the importance  
of Velocity in the  
dance ecology  
in the Pacific  
Northwest and the  
nation.””**

*– Jane Forde,  
National Dance Project*

# **GOAL 1:** **ARTISTIC PROGRAMS HAVE RESILIENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT.**

## **IMMEDIATE**

Milestone 1.1: Velocity effectively pursues new major funding for its four-tiered residency program

Milestone 1.2: Velocity revises and re-brands sustaining monthly donor program

Milestone 1.3: Velocity effectively pursues capacity building funds

## **NEAR FUTURE**

Milestone 1.4: Board 2018 - 2021 long-term needs identified and addressed

Milestone 1.5: Monthly donor program grows, meeting and exceeding budgets

Milestone 1.6: Velocity implements system for planned gifts

## **LONG TERM**

Milestone 1.7: Velocity builds cash reserves to cover a minimum of three months of operations

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**Velocity has had  
the foresight,  
grit and aplomb  
to really  
make lasting  
community  
between and  
beyond its walls.””**

*– Amii LeGendre,  
choreographer, teacher , artist*

## GOAL 2: VELOCITY DEEPENS ONGOING COMMITMENT TO INTERSECTIONAL EQUITY.

### IMMEDIATE

Milestone 2.1: Velocity uses data to develop an understanding of who accesses its current programs and why

### NEAR FUTURE

Milestone 2.2: Velocity develops an understanding of who does not access its current programs and why

Milestone 2.3: Velocity executive formalizes an Advisory Group to make recommendations to support continuing efforts to advance intersectional equity: gender, race, heritage, age (14+), ability, and economic class

Milestone 2.4: Equity training is provided to teachers, artists, staff, and board

### LONG TERM

Milestone 2.5: Equity Plan is developed, disseminated and implemented to diversify and increase participation in Velocity programs – using hard data to assess our progress

““

**Velocity gave me my first professional opportunities, and has directly contributed to the national success of many Seattle artists. It is my dance home, and essential to future generations.”**

*– Alice Gosti, Velocity  
Presenting Artists, Artist in  
Residence 2015*

## GOAL 3:

# VELOCITY AMPLIFIES ITS ROLE AS A COMMUNITY DANCE HUB INVESTED IN THE EDUCATION + DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ARTISTS.

### IMMEDIATE

Milestone 3.1: New Velocity website completed, including a micro-site for Velocity's summer festivals and mobile-optimization for donations

### NEAR FUTURE

Milestone 3.2: Velocity's teachers are supported through annual teaching labs and faculty retreats

Milestone 3.3: Velocity formalizes self-sustaining program for providing professional development training and mentorship

Milestone 3.4: Velocity assesses and determines action regarding providing box office support for non-Velocity produced events

Milestone 3.5: Velocity assesses and determines action regarding being a fiscal sponsor for local and/or regional artists

### LONG TERM

Milestone 3.6: Velocity distributes Annual Reports; hosts Annual Stakeholder Meetings

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“  
I think it’s hard  
to understand  
sometimes the  
significance of  
Velocity. It’s not  
just the space—  
Velocity echoes  
throughout  
Seattle, and  
nationally.””

– Syniva Whitney, *Velocity  
Presenting Artists, Artist in  
Residence 2018-2019*

## GOAL 4:

# VELOCITY SECURES AN AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE HOME THAT MEETS PROGRAMMATIC NEEDS WHILE BRINGING VISIBILITY TO SEATTLE DANCE.

### IMMEDIATE

Milestone 4.1: Velocity re-accesses its space needs and updates One-Sheet

Milestone 4.2: Velocity develops an understanding of competitive local/national facilities and sites, and its optimum place in that ecology

Milestone 4.3: Current facility and site assessed, and lease renewed

### NEAR FUTURE

Milestone 4.4: Key players to help plan capital campaign are assembled

Milestone 4.5: Capital campaign feasibility study is conducted

Milestone 4.6: Economic and community impact study is completed

### LONG TERM

Milestone 4.7: Capital Campaign Plan including goal, deadline and budget finalized

Milestone 4.8: Capital Campaign fundraising collateral, case statement and prospect list developed and disseminated

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**Velocity is at  
the very heart of  
dance in Seattle.””**

*– Peter Boal, Artistic Director,  
Pacific Northwest Ballet*

**velocity**  
DANCE CENTER

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