



Kelly Strayhorn Theater

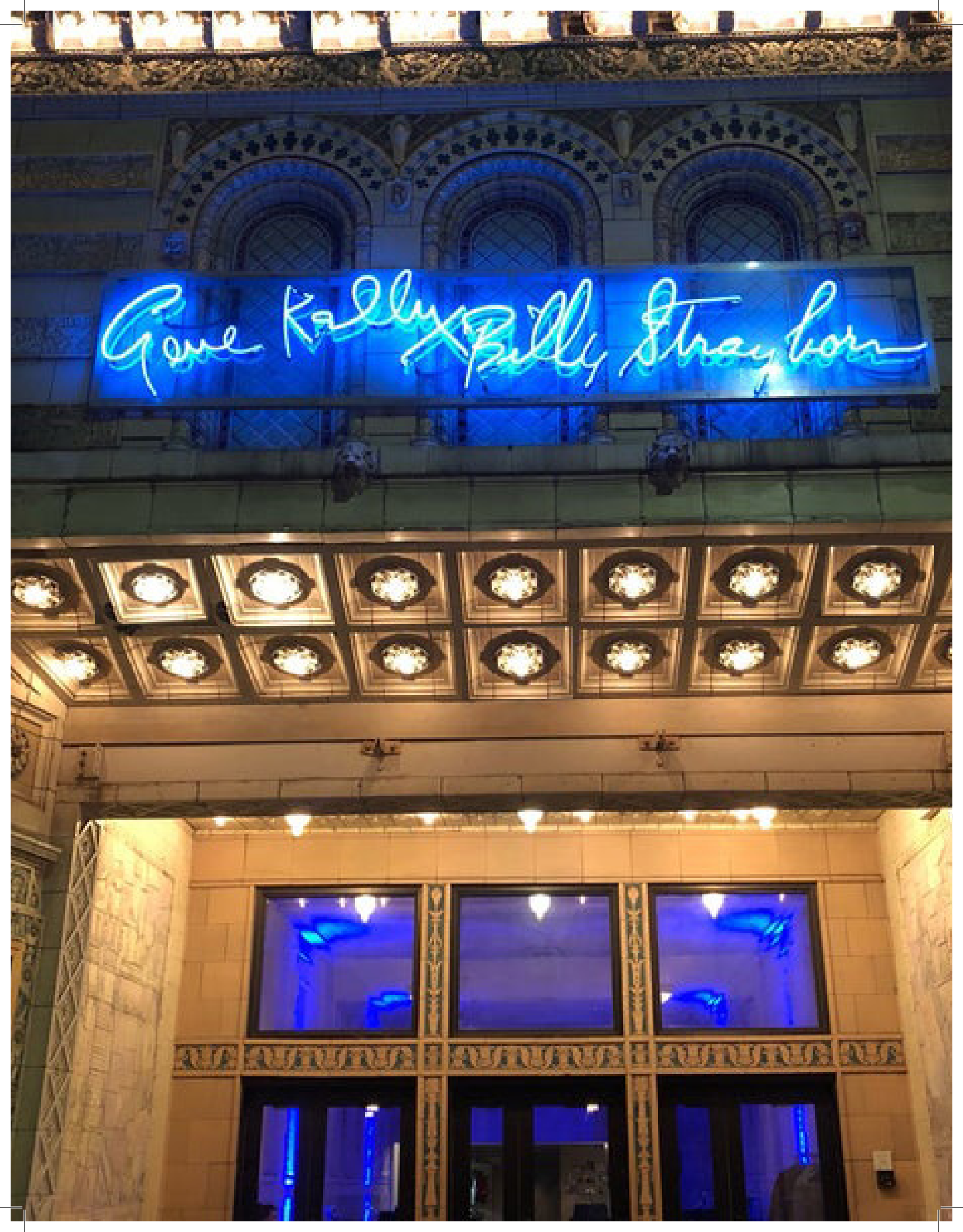
**OWNING OUR FUTURE.
THRIVING WHERE WE LIVE.**

KST Strategic Direction
2021 September - 2024 September

Developed in collaboration.
Produced by Jolita Crosland and yancey consulting



Gene Kelly, Billy Strayhorn





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JOIN US

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to Our Futures!

It is with great pleasure that I share with you Kelly Strayhorn Theater's strategic plan. Sown in community with staff, board, artists, and community leaders, *Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.* is a three-year catalyst for transformation that sets forth a hundred-year vision of liberation and preservation. This is our moment!

We choose to own our futures. We choose to thrive where we live.

Our vision is supported by Kelly Strayhorn Theater's mission to be a home for creative experimentation, community dialogue, and collective action rooted in the liberation of Black and Queer people. We take inspiration from the cultural tradition of Black homemaking and, following the Ballroom culture of Black and Latinx Queer and Trans people, we persist in making a home that upholds and affirms expressions of expansive identity and artistic forms.

Ownership is about the spaces where we create with and care for one another, as well as unapologetically claim our right to possess and present our stories and control our futures. Our vision represents a collective moment to set brave intentions for our region while connecting us to the many ongoing efforts nationally to ensure our Black and Queer community institutions have the freedom, ownership, and opportunity to nourish new generations.

Our strategic planning process established four interconnected priorities for realizing our vision:

Our Capacity:

Ensuring KST is staffed and resourced sufficiently in order to provide our artists, patrons, and partners with high-quality, thought-provoking experiences.

Our Story:

Using strategic communications so regional and national audiences understand, share, and stand in support of major KST initiatives.

Our Money:

Enhancing our business model in order to generate new earned revenue streams.

Our Space:

Developing and effectuating a plan that anchors KST in East Liberty as a property owner.

We will achieve our vision by working in partnership with community, across sectors, with allied partners, and You. We are excited to Own Our Future and Thrive Where We Live, and we know you are ready to join us in this endeavor. As you read our strategic plan, we hope you see where you fit into this journey. This plan presents a path forward to a grand harvest for Kelly Strayhorn Theater, and we invite you to till and nurture this rich soil with us.

Thank you,



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The plan that follows is a fruit of collective rigor and love.¹

We are grateful to our stakeholders -- staff, artists, present and past board members, collaborators, educators, public servants, policymakers, and funders -- for their time and commitment in this strategic process. During the planning process Yancey Consulting (YC) collected feedback via informal conversations with staff and board, online surveys from staff, board, and select artists, and interviews with eleven additional stakeholders. The core planning team, composed of staff, board, and artists, met five times to weave together the expertise, lived experiences, dreams, realities, reflections, and future-forward thinking into this strategic plan.



Image from KST archive

Thank you to all who contributed to this vision and plan!

CORE PLANNING TEAM

R. Yvonne Campos, board member

Kyle Crawford, board member

Margo Cunningham, Patron Services Manager

Caitlin Green, board chair

Orlana Darkins Drewery, Deputy Director

Adam Golden, board member

Joseph Hall, Executive Director

Darrell Kinsel, cultural agitator/visual Artist

Rebecca McNeil, shared Chief Financial Officer

Staycee Pearl, choreographer/visual artist

Ben Pryor, Programming Director

Rick Soria, board member

Michael Uhrin, Development Manager

Sondra Woodruff III, Producer, Engagement and Social Impact

¹ This strategic plan is codified by Yancey Consulting, but reflects the ideation of KST staff, board, artists, and other stakeholders in partnership with YC; thus, the pronouns "our" and "we" used throughout the plan refer to KST as a collective body of people advancing the organization's work.

KST STAFF

Kelsy Black, Marketing Manager

Chanel Blanchett, Programming Manager

Joseph Hall, Executive Director

Rebecca McNeil, Shared Chief Financial Officer

Trevor Miles, Patron Services and
Administrative Associate

Melanie Paglia, Deputy Director

Simon Phillips, Education Coordinator

Ben Pryor, Programming Director

J.R. Shaw, Production Manager

Michael Uhrin, Development Manager

KST BOARD

Deborah Acklin

R. Yvonne Campos

Martell Covington

Kyle Crawford

Joseph Decker, Treasurer

Lisa B. Freeland, Secretary

Adam Golden, Vice chair

Caitlin Green, Chair

Stacey L. Jarrell

Anne Billiet Lackner

Alyssa Lyon

Badel Mbanga

Arthur Pang

Kannu Sahni

Richard C. Smith



Image from KST archive

*Image from KST archive*

THE HARVEST OF GENERATIONS TO COME: FUTURE IMAGINATIONS

THRIVING METROPOLIS OF PITTSBURGH. A SUNNY FALL AFTERNOON IN EAST LIBERTY. 2121.

Conversations, whispers, laughter, and the occasional yell fill Penn Avenue. The whole block seems to be a running stream of motion -- electric traffic zooming by, kids joyously pointing out the colorful murals around them as they leisurely roll down on their bikes under the watchful eye of their parents, community members rooted in East Liberty for generations embracing as they find a place to sit and chat in the harvest-abundant Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) community garden, pedestrians stopping for a drink and a quick bite at the beloved theater's coffee shop and gallery. Dancers are leaving KST rehearsal studios with towels in hand, ready for their somatic treatments to refresh their bodies and their souls. Their residence with saunas, gym, acupuncture and massage studios -- all open to local communities as well -- is just around the corner at a KST-owned building.

Artists are quickly pushed aside by chatty middle-schoolers from the local school pouring into KST studios for their classes. This Saturday is fully scheduled with movement, theater, filmmaking, and coding classes. Nearby, folks are hauling props into the state-of-the-art KST black box theater, and designers are wheeling in racks of costumes. Passersby peek into the theater, asking if there are still tickets left for the show. You see, there's a KST Presents premier tomorrow, welcoming folks from near to far to experience creative "badassery," (a colloquial description of what KST does). It's a sold-out show. As many are. Embedded in the vibrant city of Pittsburgh, which has recently been named a model and beacon of equity in the nation, KST is known for being a national cultural destination, an innovative multidisciplinary cultural center for audacious creative experimentation. A brave and accessible creative home for bold voices rooted in the liberation of Black, queer, trans and other historically resilient folks. KST is owned by a Black Cultural Trust, an aspiration that we hold today for the future of Black culture in Pittsburgh.



Image from KST archive

Everybody in philanthropy is talking about equity in the arts, and when you think about it in Pittsburgh, KST is a prime player.

-KST Stakeholder engaged in the strategic planning process

OPENING SEEDS

We must look back to the past so that we understand how we became who we are, and move forward to a thriving future.



Image from KST archive

We understand that in order to build a thriving Black-led national multidisciplinary cultural center for generations to come, we must unapologetically claim and own our story, our impacts, our legacy, and our space. For that, we must have equity not only in the way we do work but also in the way we hold capital.

With roots over a century old woven into the ground of East Liberty, a historically Black neighborhood in Pittsburgh, Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST) is the city's legacy institution. Founded in 1914 as the Regent Theater, it amplified a thriving East Liberty cultural corridor alongside six other theaters -- Camera-Phone, Enright, Harris Family Theatre, Liberty, Sheridan, and the Triangle.

Back then, the neighborhood was a sprawling suburb with a vibrant cultural scene and robust economic growth. Unfortunately, in the following decades, intentional and systematic neglect of many Black and brown communities nationwide via policies, such as redlining and later, in the 1960s, urban renewal policies, devastated the thriving neighborhood. Disinvestment caused dilapidation of East Liberty's housing stock. Hundreds upon hundreds of businesses did not survive. Most theaters closed. Access to social and economic opportunities for Black communities was paralyzed. The neighborhood quickly became perceived as unsafe. However, the historical Regent Theater persevered. Over the decades, communities living in the neighborhood enjoyed the Regent first as a photoplay house, then a cinema, followed by a music venue that mainly focused on jazz. These iterations were interlaced with years of going "dark." Finally, in 2000, the renovated theater reopened as Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST). It now stands as the only theater in the neighborhood.

KST is known in Pittsburgh to many as a creative hub for local East End communities and folks from Pittsburgh to experience thought-provoking art. It is a place to gather, see great quality art, embrace each other's differences, learn, dispute, celebrate, heal, and grow in an environment that is welcoming. KST is known for creating accessible opportunities for emerging artists, especially LGBTQIA+, Black, women, and people of color,

to create, showcase their work, and—as many stakeholders engaged in the planning process uplifted—to “speak truth to power.” The theater invites audiences to experience programming that highlights the diversity within the arts community.

Today, East Liberty is experiencing rapid economic revitalization, in part because of KST’s cultural vitality and draw. However, alongside the economic rebirth of East Liberty comes gentrification, threatening to displace more Black and low-wealth communities whose home it is. As we look back into our past, we know how fragile the neighborhood that we call home can be. How fragile it still is. How impacted it is by the policies that often erase Black and brown folks.

We are building a future where we unapologetically claim our legacy and our future.

We are building a future where we thrive where we live.

We are building a future where we own.

We are building for us and all Black, Indigenous, people of color, queer folks, and historically resilient communities who are marginalized and silenced.



Image from KST archive

OUR VISION AND STRATEGIC GROWTH



Image from KST archive

We started this planning process to develop a strategic plan, but we soon realized that what we have arrived at is not just a plan-- it is the catalyst for a transformation.

As we embarked on a strategic visioning and planning process with staff, board, artists, and other stakeholders, we knew our pain points -- our lease of the theater building is set to expire in eight years, our team has been experiencing high turnover, Covid-19 pandemic eroded our business model which relied on in-person convenings. Our job, we thought, was to find the medicine for our pains, but we soon realized that our solutions to address the root causes of our pain produced not only a plan but a mindset and a transformation.

Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.

In this commitment lies not only the direction for the organization -- owning who we are, owning our impacts, owning our values of equity and diversity, owning sustainable earned revenue streams, and owning our space -- but also something much deeper -- a mindset and a movement. *Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.* speaks to undoing the erasure and marginalization of Black, LGBTQIA+, low-wealth, and other communities that are oppressed by the current social, economic, political, legal, and assets-building systems. It speaks not only to KST and East Liberty, but also the city of Pittsburgh where population has been declining for years directly affecting the city's economic thriving. Pittsburgh is losing creators, makers, and thinkers due to domestic migration. Many, especially Black people, do not have opportunities to thrive in Pittsburgh². *Owning our Future. Thriving Where We Live.* is about the agency and power that lives within each of us to claim and manifest our lives, to thrive where we are and where we live.

To advance our vision and strategic direction, we will focus on our story, our space, our capacity, our money. We will build local to national presence and partnerships across arts and culture, education, businesses, and racial and economic justice sectors to amplify KST's programming, presence, and value. We will unapologetically claim the *Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.* mindset and vision for us and for all Black, Indigenous, people of color, queer folks, and historically resilient communities.

² Pittsburgh is one of the worst cities in the nation for Black women to live according to Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission's report "Pittsburgh's Inequality Across Gender and Race," released in 2019.



Image from Kelly Strayhorn Theater

No other arts organization I can think of in the US is specifically centering Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) + queer folks in the way Kelly Strayhorn Theater is. There are orgs centering BIPOC. There are orgs centering Queer. But this combination, its history and relationship to social justice and its presenting profile are super unique.

-KST Stakeholder engaged in the strategic planning process

OUR MISSION



KST is a home for creative experimentation, community dialogue, and collective action rooted in the liberation of Black and queer people.³

OUR PEOPLE



We welcome to our home all who uplift Black, Indigenous, people of color, and queer voices. We focus our services on:

- Black women
- LGBTQIA+
- People of color
- Emerging artists

We will continue centering historically resilient folks.



Image from KST archive

³ "Mission as appears here is in draft form until approved by the Board of Trustees."

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS TOWARDS

Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.



Image from KST archive

To advance towards our long-term strategic vision and direction, we have to start now. We have named four strategic priorities for 2021-2024. Although we are highlighting our story, our space, our capacity, and our money at this strategic moment, these priorities are perennial. They define who Kelly Strayhorn Theater was, is, and will be. They are hoisted by our values and contributions to our community, society, and sector, and they will define our legacy.



OUR STORY	OUR SPACE	OUR CAPACITY	OUR MONEY
<p>Ensure that Pittsburghers and artists know about KST and what it offers to them, and are inspired to patronize, work and stand with KST when needed.</p>	<p>Develop and effectuate a plan that anchors KST in East Liberty as a property owner.</p>	<p>Serve KST people with care, so staff and board are inspired and equipped to work.</p>	<p>Generate diverse and generative revenue streams.</p>
<p>G1: Reintroduce KST to Pittsburgh as an equitable cultural center for transdisciplinary creative experimentation and a home for Black and LGBTQIA+ communities rooted in Pittsburgh to the general public and artists, local to national.</p> <p>G2: Position KST as a national arts and culture Black-led organization stewarding We Own Our Future vision for KST and all other organizations who are or might be in a similar equity-less situation.</p>	<p>G1: KST has a plan to secure, with an intent to own, real estate property in Pittsburgh</p>	<p>G1: Increase staff compensation over time to account for market conditions.</p> <p>G2: Ensure workplace wellbeing and enjoyment, where staff are inspired to bring their full selves, their creativity and rigor to work and where they feel equipped to effectuate the mission and grow professionally.</p> <p>G3: Build capacity to have enough people to do the job without burning out.</p>	<p>G1: Diversify contributed and earned revenue sources to achieve the contributed versus earned ratio of 80:20 by 2024.</p> <p>G2: Build operating cash reserves by having at least three months of operating costs available in the reserve (approx. 300,000) by the end of FY24.</p>

In the following pages, we have mapped out strategies and actions for each priority and goal. Overall, strategies and actions fall under the arcs of storytelling to build support for KST and the *Owning Our Future* vision, relationship-building across sectors and allies, capacity and staff wellbeing, and sustainable revenue generation.

GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

While we will kick off strategies and activities across all four priorities immediately, we will scaffold our work overtime to create space for steady implementation without burning out.

FY22 September– onward:

Tilling and Prepping the Soil

We will focus on planning, assessment, and kicking-off strategies that (re)introduce KST and its work and future vision to Pittsburgh's stakeholders -- artists, communities, patrons, funders, and business communities. We will be clear on our legacy and our offerings to artists and audiences. We will grow our team.

FY23: September–onward:

Nourishing the Soil

We will continue expanding our team to focus on achieving our capitalization goals, especially increasing and sustaining contributed income opportunities. We will also continue amplifying the *Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.* vision locally and nationally.

FY24: September–onward:

Growing the Harvest

We will focus on planning a capital campaign needed to position KST as a property owner in Pittsburgh.



Image from KST archive

**I feel seen
when I am at
KST.**

*-KST Stakeholder engaged in the strategic planning
process*

PRIORITY AT A GLANCE:

OUR STORY

PAIN POINTS THAT WE ARE ADDRESSING

In developing this plan, we engaged with KST stakeholders at an intersection of identities -- artists, educators, arts administrators, activists, policymakers, community development organizations, funders, and community members to make sure we hold and include their voices and perspectives into our analysis for this plan. We heard that KST is not as visible nor active as it used to be. While the COVID-19 pandemic certainly kept KST and other cultural institutions that rely on an in-person business model out of sight and out of mind, many uplifted that even before the pandemic, KST's visibility in Pittsburgh was winding down.

We also heard that people are excited to welcome the new Executive Director, Joseph Hall, to KST and Pittsburgh. Joseph joined just before the pandemic hit in March of 2020, and many are excited to witness Joseph's leadership and vision in the post-pandemic world.

Many folks that we have engaged in this planning process and others who, through the years, have shared their experiences with KST, referred to the theater as a home—a safe space for being together, embracing differences, growing and healing. Many referred to KST as a creative place to experience thought-provoking quality art that uplifts Black, LGBTQIA+, and women's voices. Many also relish KST for our hyper-local focus -- a safe and brave home for local Black communities of the East End. We acknowledge the universal human need to belong and feel psychologically safe. It is a yearning that is not exclusive to local communities. That is why we want to continue being a local creative home for Black and LGBTQIA+ creatives and audiences and amplify our presence and ethos nationally.

Finally, the story of KST is not only the story of East Liberty, a Black neighborhood in Pittsburgh that was systematically neglected and now is re-emerging with high rents that push out historic residents. It is a story of so many Black and brown neighborhoods and organizations. Many Black-, Indigenous-, and people of color-led organizations and businesses get the rug pulled from under their feet in gentrifying neighborhoods because they do not own their own spaces. ***Owning Our Future*** is OUR story, where OUR represents the plurality of Black communities, the hundreds and thousands of Black-founded and Black-led organizations that want to thrive in a space that is owned by them. We are building for the shared futures of Black people. We want to create a model for other Black-led organizations to claim their impacts and future. And we want to do it together across the nation.



Image from KST archive

Our 2 Goals:

G1:

Reintroduce KST to Pittsburgh as an equitable cultural center for transdisciplinary creative experimentation rooted in Pittsburgh to the general public and artists, local to national.

Timing: Sept. 2021 and onwards.

Our Strategies:

Dates in parentheses are the anticipated specific timeframes to start the implementation of that particular strategy.

S1:

Develop communication talking points about KST's impacts and vision. Integrate such communications in all organization's internal and external-facing messaging. (Immediately)

S2:

Develop KST's brand book for consistent communication across channels. (FY22, KST has already started with the hire of Marketing Manager)

- Engage local funders with an ask to provide capacity support for strategic communications support, following the Ford Foundation's model that works with Spitfire Communications to provide strategic communications support to Ford's grantees. (Immediately)

S3:

Develop a local engagement plan with accountability and measurable tracking metrics for each of KST's stakeholder groups to build trust and loyalty. (FY22, May 2022)

- Have clear information of what KST offers to what kind of artists on the website.
- Organize in-person and remote artist briefings about KST offerings and vision.
- Organize community briefings to share vision and steward buy-in.

S4:

Develop and activate a national communications plan to elevate brand identity, KST's work, and vision. (FY23, Sept. 2022)



Image from KST archive

G2:

Position KST as a national arts and culture Black-led organization stewarding *Owning Our Future* vision for KST and all other organizations who are or might be in a similar equity-less situation.

Timing: Sept. 2022 and onwards.

S1:

Organize a national convening under the theme arc of *Owning Our Future*. (FY24)

S2:

Publish national op-eds. (Immediately)

- Kick-off with op-ed discussing strategic direction inspired by the *Owning Our Future* vision, distributed locally to nationally.

S3:

Present at national conferences and speak on panels uplifting *Owning Our Future* vision, local to national. (FY22, Jan. 2022)

S4:

Participate as guests on podcasts across arts and culture, social and economic justice sectors. (Immediately)

HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE SUCCEEDED

- Every adult Black Pittsburgher knows about KST.
- KST staff is a keynote speaker at two events annually.
- KST staff produces 6 op-eds annually.
- National *We Own The Future* convening is sold out.
- National media platforms write about KST.



Image from KST archive

WEAVING IN THE BOARD

Narrative building is akin to creating a mosaic:

each staff, each board member, each patron, each funder, each strategy, each tactic, each performance, each Facebook post, each dinner exchange make one image. We want that image -- OUR STORY -- to be unison, recognizable, and seeded across the nation. KST board members are active stewards of our story, the organization's mission and vision, and as such, will utilize their financial, social, and reputational capital to tell stories that build towards Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live. This work might show up as co-writing op-eds, participating in events, conferences, and panels as representatives of KST, or using existing relationships to create pathways for the ED and other KST staffers to tell the story of KST.

I've met some incredible staff and individuals connected to the organization, and that makes me so hopeful and excited for its future!

It could be something really big for the Pittsburgh performing arts scene with the right strategic moves. More than just big - it could be a type of home for local artists.

That's something we really need more of.

-KST stakeholder engaged in the planning process

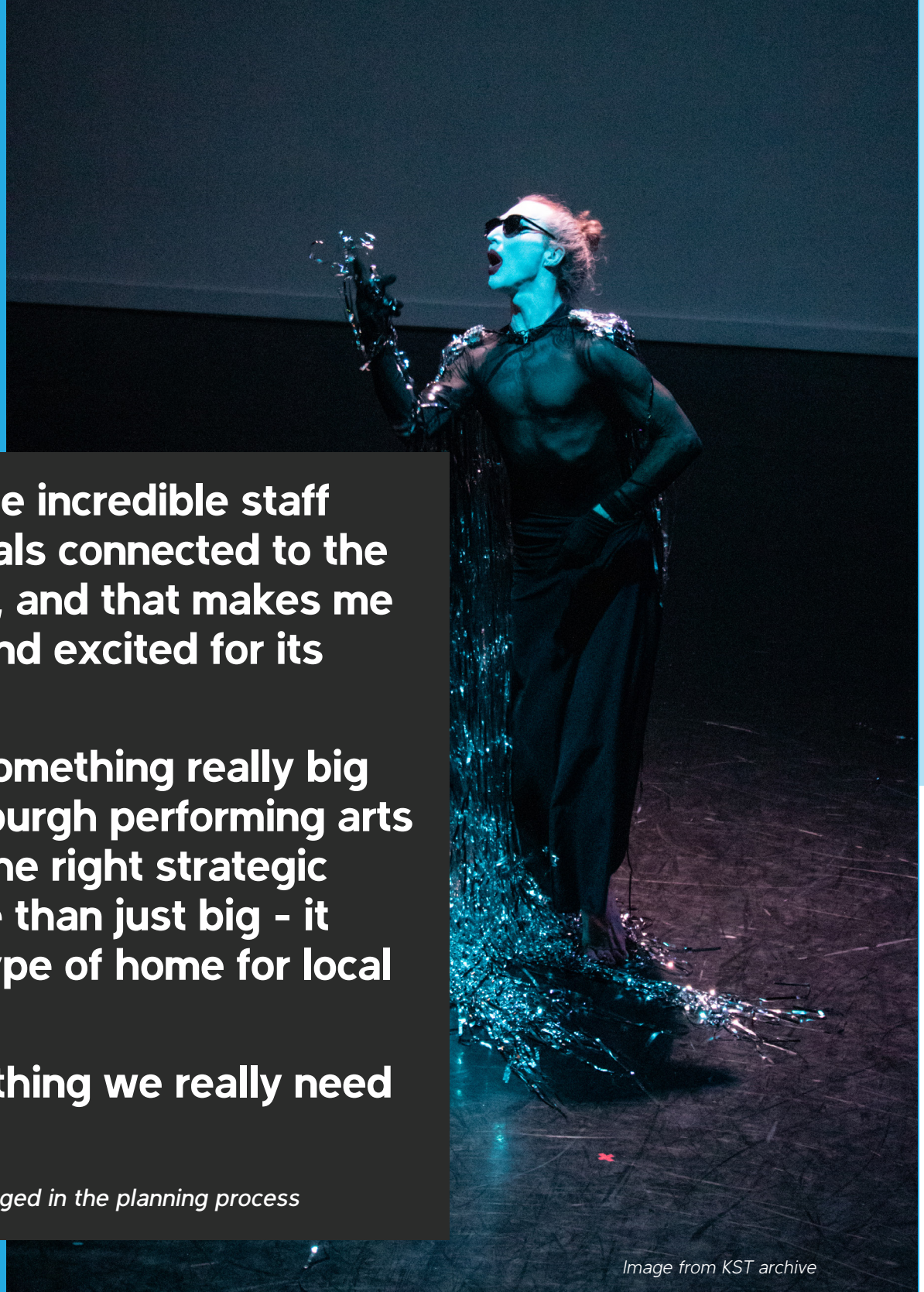


Image from KST archive

PRIORITY AT A GLANCE:



OUR SPACE

PAIN POINTS THAT WE ARE ADDRESSING

Currently, KST is renting space at two locations: the main theater and KST's Alloy Studios. The lease on the theater is expiring in eight years, and the lease on KST's Alloy Studios is ending in three. While we have been in conversations with property owners about our future in those spaces, it is clear to us that our physical spaces are not guaranteed to stay as they are, and that their loss would possibly erase KST from the map of East Liberty. We know with the loss of other neighborhood cultural and social anchors that there's no history of sustaining Black-led institutions in East Liberty. We choose to stay in our home. We choose to *Thrive Where We Live*. We choose to find a pathway to achieving equity and owning our own space. We invite Pittsburgh policymakers to show up and stand in communion with us in ensuring that mistakes of the past, when East Liberty suffered an economic downfall because of urban policies, are not repeated.



Image from KST archive

Our 1 Goal:

G1:

KST has a scaffolded plan to purchase real estate property in Pittsburgh, either the current theater, KST's Alloy Studios, or another space that is aligned with KST values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

Timing: Immediately and onwards.

Our Strategies:

Dates in parentheses are the anticipated specific timeframes to start the implementation of that particular strategy.

S1:

Continue deepening relationship with Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation and McKnight Realty Partners, who own current KST spaces, so KST's desires are heard, respected and taken into serious consideration. (Immediately)

S2:

Using the Engagement Plan developed under Our Story priority, build a group of community members in Pittsburgh and across the nation to support *Owning Our Future* vision and KST's work. (FY22, Jan-Mar. 2021)

S3:

Build and deepen relationships with policymakers and other influencers local to global to build social capital to amplify *Owning Our Future* vision and direction. (FY22, Jan. 2022)

- Focus on local policymakers, public servants working in government, community organizers with established credentials and social networks, media, funders, and local and regional businesses who have expressed solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement.

S4:

Conduct a feasibility study on owning a space in Pittsburgh, prioritizing East Liberty. In the study explore sole and co-ownership models. (FY23)

S5:

Once the most optimal KST space ownership model has been decided, develop a capitalization plan. (FY24)

HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE SUCCEEDED

- Within 3 years, we have a feasibility plan of what ownership of KST space looks like, how much it will cost, and how we will fund it.

WEAVING IN THE BOARD

As we focus on growing our team, we know that there will always be work to do that amplifies our commitment to the liberation of Black, queer, femme, gay, trans, non-binary, and other bold voices that are often silenced and marginalized. As such, we will rely heavily on our board to support the preparations needed for a capital campaign to own our own space.



Image from KST archive



Image from KST archive

**KST is a
transformer
that battles
the racism
monster.**

-KST stakeholder engaged in the planning process

PRIORITY AT A GLANCE:

OUR CAPACITY

PAIN POINTS THAT WE ARE ADDRESSING

We realize that to effectuate our mission and vision, we have to ensure that our people -- staff -- are taken care of, inspired, and equipped to do the work. During the last few years, low compensation, a fast-paced work environment, and long to-do lists have caused burnout and a high staff turnover rate. This, in return, has inhibited KST's capacity and drained institutional knowledge that propels organizational systems, culture, and learnings.

There are now seven full-time team members at KST a shared Chief Financial Officer (CFO)⁴. Four out of the seven joined the organization during the strategic planning process: Production Manager, Marketing Manager, Deputy Director and Patron Services and Administrative Associate. We plan to grow the team in the upcoming years to meet our capitalization goals and to advance our vision of *Owning Our Future*.

Current team as of August, 2021	Planned Capacity Building for FY 22-24 ⁵ :
<p>Seven full-time staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director Deputy Director <i>(hired at the end of the strategic planning process)</i> Marketing Manager <i>(hired during the strategic planning process)</i> Patron Services and Administrative Associat <i>(hired during the strategic planning process)</i> Programming Director Production Manager <i>(hired during the strategic planning process)</i> Development Manager <p>+ One CFO shared with four other nonprofits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FY22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programming Manager ● Education Coordinator <i>(could be shared with other nonprofits)</i> ● Rentals Manager <i>(could be shared with other nonprofits)</i> ● Two interns ■ FY23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development Director (position level depends on available investment) ■ FY24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Production Assistant ● Communications and Marketing Director

⁴ KST believes in collaborative capacity building across values-aligned organizations. As such, CFO is shared across five organizations.

⁵ KST fiscal year (FY) starts in September.

HOW NEW HIRES ADVANCE OUR PRIORITIES OF STORY, SPACE, CAPACITY, AND MONEY.

PROGRAMMING MANAGER



Mostly advances STORY & MONEY

- Focuses on KST Presents programming and partnerships for KST stakeholders -- adults, artists, national and local partners -- to effectuate the organization's mission.

EDUCATION COORDINATOR



Mostly advances MONEY & CAPACITY

- Focuses on community-focused educational programming for KST stakeholders -- children, adults, artists -- to effectuate the organization's mission. In return, mission-aligned programming supports the Development department's ability to fundraise for KST community-focused programming.

RENTALS MANAGER



Mostly advances MONEY & SPACE

- Focuses on increasing facilities used to generate earned revenue.
- Streamlines internal KST rental processes for quicker and more efficient turnaround.

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



Advances MONEY

- Focuses on strategy development and implementation to maximize contributed revenue opportunities across philanthropic, government, individual, and corporate sources.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING DIRECTOR



Mostly advances STORY

- Focuses on amplifying *Owning Our Future* and KST as a Black-led creative home for Black, Indigenous, people of color, and queer folks who are marginalized and silenced.
- Works in close partnership with the ED and Development department to tell stories in the service of organization’s capitalization.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT



Mostly advances MONEY

- Focuses on KST Presents programming to increase earned revenue.

<h3>Our 3 Goals:</h3>	<p>Our Strategies: Dates in parentheses are the anticipated specific timeframes to start the implementation of that particular strategy.</p>
<p>G1: Increase compensation over time to account for market conditions.</p> <p>Timing: Sept. 2021 and onwards.</p>	<p>S1: Provide annual COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) salary increases. (Already built into FY22 budget)</p>
<p>G2: Ensure workplace wellbeing and enjoyment, where staff are inspired to bring their full and best selves, their creativity and rigor to work and where they feel equipped to effectuate the mission and grow professionally.</p> <p>Timing: Jan. 2022 and onwards.</p>	<p>S1: Review staff benefits to ensure employees are aware of, have access to, and utilize existing benefits. (FY22, Jan. 2022)</p> <p>S2: Identify opportunities to expand benefits, and map out a plan for more holistic care offerings across future years. (FY23, Jan. 2023)</p>

	<p>S3:</p> <p>Formalize professional development opportunities by dedicating \$1,500 annually to each full-time staffer. (FY23, Sept. 2022)</p> <p>S4:</p> <p>Offer paid time-defined periods during work hours for staff to engage in mentorship opportunities among themselves, with the board, or external mentors and programs. (FY22, Nov. 2021)</p>
<p>G3:</p> <p>Build capacity to have enough people to do the job without burning out.</p> <p>Timing: Ongoing.</p>	<p>S1: Hire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education Coordinator and Rentals Managers (FY22) ■ Two interns (FY22) ■ Development Director (depending on available investment) (FY23) ■ Communications and Marketing Director (FY24) ■ Production Assistant (FY24)

HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE SUCCEEDED

- Staff stay with the organization for at least three years.
- Each staff member has a personal work growth plan that is developed in collaboration and the organization.
- The organization implements yearly staff wellbeing and work enjoyment surveys or conversations to assess if the organization is meeting its goals.
- At least 90% of staff indicate that they are not burnt-out.



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Image from KST archive

WEAVING IN THE BOARD

As of August 2021, our Board of Directors has thirteen members, who are committed to being active stewards of the organization’s mission alongside staff. In the upcoming years, the board will focus on inviting new voices to diversify its composition in:



DEMOGRAPHICS

To ensure it reflects the people we focus on: Black women, LGBTQIA+, people of color, and emerging artists.



EXPERTISE

To ensure the board can support staff with expertise that is limited or missing among existing staff, such as real estate development, human resources, policy, finance, and technology.

The board will be weaving the social capital needed for the organization to build the support across policymakers, influencers, and the public for *Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live*. This entails recruiting new board members who are KST values-aligned, activating personal rosters to build buy-in and supporters for a public discourse that unapologetically claims that KST must own its space.



Image from KST archive

PRIORITY AT A GLANCE:



OUR MONEY

We want to ensure that our organization grows and thrives in fiscally sustainable and generative ways. Like most nonprofit organizations, our revenue is not diversified enough. We primarily rely on local philanthropic support, which makes us dependent on a few funders. COVID-19 has prohibited in-person revenue opportunities such as rental income, tickets, merchandise. We know we have to address this pain point moving forward.

Our 2 Goals:

G1:

Diversify contributed and earned revenue sources to achieve the contributed versus earned ratio of 80:20 by 2024.

Timing: Sept. 2021 and onwards.

Our Strategies:

Dates in parentheses are the anticipated specific timeframes to start the implementation of that particular strategy.

Towards diversifying contributed income:

S1:

Organize briefings and build relationships with national philanthropic funders and small family and donor-advised foundations. (Immediately)

S2:

Build relationships with policymakers, such as the mayor, so that KST is part of developing the city's cultural plan that ensures money for art organizations is part of Pittsburgh's budget. (Immediately)

S3:

Develop and activate a corporate relationship-building plan, targeting businesses and corporations who claim solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. (FY22, Jan. 2022)

	<p>Towards diversifying earned income:</p> <p>S1: Open up the KST Lounge. (FY24)</p> <p>S2: Hire Education Coordinator and Rentals Manager to have dedicated capacity to increase rental activity and revenue, focusing on personal celebration events such as weddings, birthday parties, graduations, etc. (FY22)</p> <p>Towards both:</p> <p>S1: Assess existing programming and fine-tune to a balanced annual program portfolio that spans across highly subsidized mission-focused work, and activities that are still values aligned and produce net income, with a targeted 30% or more profit margin. (Immediately)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Audit existing programming roster to document reach, implementation resources required, and financial viability; identify new programs to pursue given the vision; and prune and design a viable programming model. ■ Develop a programming refinement team to assess phased programming modifications over time. ■ Build a programming plan to support vision and thrivability goals using the viable programming model.
<p>G2: Build operating cash reserves by having at least three months of operating costs available in reserve (about \$300,000) by the end of FY24.</p> <p>Timing: Sept. 2022 and onwards.</p>	<p>S1: Commit to depositing full or partial surpluses at the end of each fiscal year to build cash reserves over time.</p> <p>S2: Identify multiple foundation stakeholders with a commitment to equitable funding to invest in the <i>Own Our Future</i> vision.</p>

Revenue Generation Strategies



Revenue generation is key for a sustainable KST. Below are more detailed revenue generation strategies for reaching FY22–24 OUR MONEY goals.

CONTRIBUTED REVENUE

Target audience	What does the audience need to know?	Strategies	Timing	Who's leading this work?
Local & Regional Philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ clear vision ■ how KST will reach its vision ■ credible and active board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ build on existing relationships with funders ■ increase local and regional PR ■ uplift Joseph Hall's leadership ■ organize funder briefings ■ invite funders to events ■ have a credible, active, and visible board that leverages its social capital ■ rally and showcase national support for <i>Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.</i> 	<p>Immediately</p> <p>KST needs to reintroduce itself to Pittsburgh philanthropy with the new vision and ED</p>	ED & Development Department
National Philanthropy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ clear vision ■ diverse funding streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uplift Black-led organization narrative ■ integrate a clear articulation of the vision in all messaging ■ have a credible and active board that advocates on behalf of KST 	FY23	ED & Development Department

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how KST will reach its vision ■ Black, Indigenous, people of color and LGBTQIA+ leadership and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ have diverse funding streams to show national funders that KST is diversified ■ have a solid business plan of anticipated earned and contributed revenue streams ■ be clear and unapologetic about KST's legacy and impacts ■ be a model for other Black-led organizations (<i>Owning Our Future</i>) 		
<p>Local & Regional Corporations/ Businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ history and legacy ■ clear impacts ■ clear vision ■ organization's reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ uplift KST's reach, history, and legacy ■ integrate a clear articulation of the vision in all messaging ■ be clear and unapologetic about KST's impacts ■ engage corporations and businesses via briefings and one-on-one meetings ■ focus and reach out to all corporations in East Liberty and adjoining neighborhoods ■ meet with B-corps and other businesses in Pittsburgh and the region that claim solidarity with Black Lives Matter ■ focus on organizing meetings with top leaders in Pittsburgh and the region and businesses that have creatives as founders 	<p>Immediately</p>	<p>Deputy Director & Development Department</p>

<p>Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ history and legacy ■ clear impacts ■ clear vision ■ community buy-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ develop and deepen relationships and partnerships with public institutions and officials via briefings, one-on-one meetings, invitations to events, and renting KST spaces for government events. 	<p>Immediately</p>	<p>ED & Development Department</p>
<p>Individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ legacy ■ clear value proposition ■ clear vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ grow individual donors from Black and LGBTQIA+ communities locally and nationally by developing and deploying individual donor engagement and growth plan ■ build a sustainable base, where folks contribute monthly via automatic deductions 	<p>Immediately</p>	<p>Development Department & Patron Services</p>



Image from KST archive

Earned Revenue

Program	Target audience	What does the audience need to know?	Strategies	Timing	Who's leading this work?
Creative programming	Local Pittsburgh audiences first, then national audiences via virtual and in-person touring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ KST vision, values, and mission ■ clear value proposition ■ KST brand and that it represents quality programming ■ accessible prices and where earned revenue is invested ■ Black, Indigenous, people of color and LGBTQIA+ leadership and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ generate income via ticket sales for KST Presents events, educational classes (such as dance, technology and arts) to children and adults, conversations, panels, and festivals ■ offer KST production services for other creatives and events ■ create and sell KST and <i>Owning Our Future</i> vision inspired merchandise at KST events and online on KST's website 	Immediately	Programming Department

<p>Community events</p>	<p>East Liberty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ KST vision, values, and mission ■ Black, Indigenous, people of color and LGBTQIA+ leadership and impacts ■ KST legacy ■ accessible prices ■ where earned revenue is invested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ create alliances with community organizations and businesses that do not have space or have lost their space to welcome their audiences by sharing space for certain events 	<p>Immediately</p>	<p>Programming Department</p>
<p>Corporate and other rentals (space and equipment)</p>	<p>Pittsburgh and the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ efficient rental processes and accessible prices ■ Black, Indigenous, people of color and LGBTQIA+ leadership and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ hire a shared rentals manager who would be focused on selling rentals to artists and communities such as birthday parties, graduations, weddings, etc. This position would streamline processes for quicker and more efficient turnaround compared to current systems. 	<p>Immediately</p>	<p>Programming Department and Rentals Manager</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ conduct price feasibility study and implement a fee structure that is clear, easy to understand and implement. ■ formalize subsidy programs with clear criteria who qualify for it. ■ monetize equipment rental by offering it as a stand alone or add-on service 		
KST Lounge	Local East Liberty and Pittsburgh audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ KST mission and brand ■ that there's always quality service ■ where earned revenue is invested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ KST already has an alcohol license and is a place of social convenings before and after events. The strategy is to establish a KST Lounge that would be open to the public at times other than just during events. The lobby space would be activated as a community space outside of the performance schedule. 	FY24	Deputy Director

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ explore opportunities to partner with a bar that existed in East Liberty and closed to run the cafe. This would bring in expertise that is not currently present at KST.■ host talks, movie screenings, and exhibits to attract audiences on an ongoing basis.		
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HOW WILL WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE SUCCEEDED

- 20% of revenue is earned revenue.
- There is at least three months of operating cash flow available by Sept. 2024.
- KST Lounge is open and thriving.
- Pittsburgh’s budget has a line for historic theater support.
- The base of individual sustainers is 1000 by Sept. 2024.



Image from KST archive

WEAVING IN THE BOARD



One of the board’s key responsibilities is to steward the fiscal health of the organization. This work entails not only sound fiscal oversight but also bringing in capital, monetary, or otherwise (such as social or reputational) either directly or by leveraging existing board members’ relationships. Each board member is anticipated to, as several board members have communicated during this planning process, “roll up their sleeves” in their service to KST.

An active, credible, and visible board is also important to funders to indicate that the organization has a healthy internal infrastructure to sustain and thrive.

SPECIFIC STRATEGY & ACTION IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE & ACCOUNTABILITY

Below are specific strategies and actions. They fall under the arcs of storytelling, relationship-building, capacity and staff wellbeing, and revenue generation. Our fiscal year starts in September.

Legend: **OUR STORY** | **OUR SPACE** | **OUR CAPACITY** | **OUR MONEY**

	Strategies And Actions	Lead
FY22	STAFF CAPACITY AND WELLBEING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer time to staff to engage in mentorship opportunities among themselves, with board members, or external mentors and programs. ■ Implement annual COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) salary increases to all staff who have been with the organization for one year or more. ■ Review staff benefits to uplift existing offerings for self-care. ■ Hire two interns. 	ED & Deputy Director
	STORYTELLING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop communications talking points about KST's impacts and vision. Integrate such communications in all of the organization's internal and external-facing messaging and public imaging plans. ■ Amplify <i>Owning Our Future</i> via op-eds, panels, conferences, and guest appearances on podcasts. ■ Develop KST's brand book for consistent communication across channels. 	Marketing Manager
	RELATIONSHIP - BUILDING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a local engagement plan with accountability and measurable tracking metrics for each of KST's stakeholder groups to build trust and loyalty. 	ED & Patron Services & Marketing Manager

Lead indicates the staffer who is accountable to ensure that the work gets done in collaboration with others. Lead does not mean that the person is doing the work by themselves.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cultivate, steward, and grow relationships with local to national policymakers, such as the mayor, so that KST is part of developing the city’s cultural plan that ensures money for art organizations is part of Pittsburgh’s budget. ■ Continue deepening relationship with Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), who owns KST’s Alloy Studios, and affirm BGC’s future plans for KST’s Alloy Studios. 	<p>ED</p>
	<p>REVENUE GENERATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hire an Education Coordinator and Rentals Manager. ■ Engage local funders with an ask to provide capacity support for strategic communications, following the Ford Foundation’s model that works with Spitfire Communications to provide strategic communications support. ■ Organize briefings and build relationships with national philanthropic funders and small family and donor-advised foundations. ■ Develop and activate a corporate relationship-building plan, targeting businesses and corporations who claim solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. ■ Assess and fine-tune existing programming to achieve a balanced annual program portfolio that spans from highly subsidized mission-focused work to values aligned activities that generate profit. 	<p>ED & Deputy Director & Development Manager</p> <p>Programming Director & ED</p>
<p>FY23</p>	<p>STAFF CAPACITY AND WELLBEING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify opportunities to expand benefits, and map out a plan for more holistic care offerings across future years. ■ Formalize professional development opportunities by dedicating \$1,500 annually to each full-time staffer. ■ Hire a Development Director. 	<p>ED & Deputy Director</p>
	<p>STORYTELLING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a national communications plan to elevate brand identity, KST’s work, and vision. ■ Continue amplifying <i>Owning Our Future</i> via op-eds, panels, conferences, and guest appearances on podcasts. 	<p>Communications and Marketing Director</p>

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING:

- Using the Engagement Plan developed under Our Story priority, build a group of community members in Pittsburgh who support the *Owning Our Future* vision, so as to have a critical mass to influence public discourse and policy.
- Conduct a feasibility study of owning a space in Pittsburgh, prioritizing East Liberty. In the study explore sole and co-ownership models.
- Continue building relationships with local to national policymakers.

ED & Deputy Director

Communications and Marketing Director

REVENUE GENERATION:

- Continue organizing briefings and build relationships with national philanthropic funders, small family and donor-advised foundations.
- Continue implementing corporate relationship-building plan.

Development Manager

ED & Development Manager



Image from KST archive

FY24	STAFF CAPACITY AND WELLBEING:	Deputy Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hire a Production Assistant. ■ Hire Communications and Marketing Director. 	
	STORYTELLING AND RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING:	Programming Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organize a national convening under the theme arc of <i>We Own Our Future</i> ■ Continue amplifying <i>Owning Our Future</i> via op-eds, panels, conferences, and guest appearances on podcasts. ■ Continue building relationships with local to national policymakers. ■ Continue building a local to national base for <i>Owning Our Future</i> supporters. 	Communications and Marketing Director ED Patron Services & Communications and Marketing Director
REVENUE GENERATION:	ED & Development Manager	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue organizing briefings and build relationships with national philanthropic funders, small family and donor-advised foundations. ■ Open up the KST Lounge. 	Deputy Director	
OWNING REAL ESTATE:	ED & Deputy Director	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Decide on the KST space ownership model and develop a capitalization plan. 		



I am
we
and
we
are many.

-Lisa Yancey



Image from KST archive

JOIN US

Surveying the media of today, one will notice that the times that we are in are often referred to as racial reckoning. It is the time where many white Americans are questioning white supremacist systems that oppress Black people, on whose work and legacy this country is built. At this moment of shared introspection, we must continue to be loud and unapologetic about OUR -- Black -- stories. We at KST continue to be committed to uplifting Black and LGBTQIA+ voices. We will continue to do so by being a brave and accessible space for thought-provoking creative experimentation and dialog that is rooted in the liberation of those who are silenced and marginalized.

We understand that in order to build a thriving Black-led national multidisciplinary cultural center for generations to come, we cannot do it alone. We do not want to do it alone. We will build partnerships across sectors to amplify creative experimentation in the service of Black, Indigenous, people of color, and LGBTQIA+ liberation. We want to create a collective WE.

WE ARE BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE WE UNAPOLOGETICALLY CLAIM OUR STORIES.

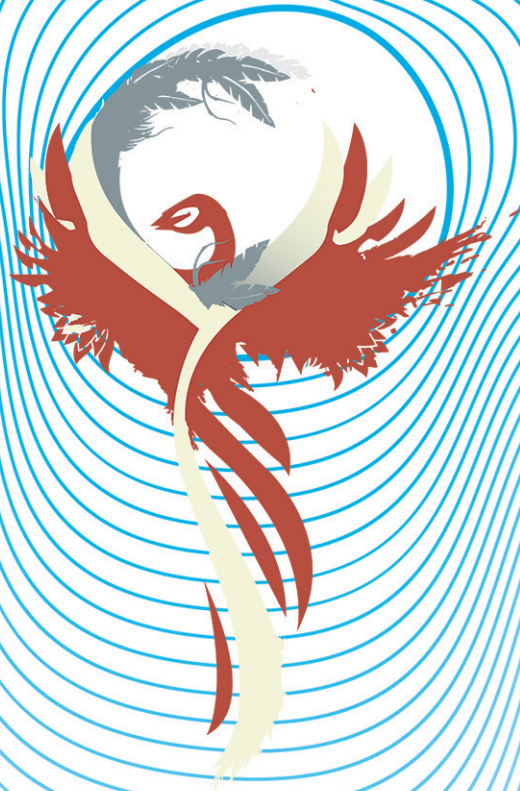
WE ARE BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE WE OWN.

WE ARE BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE WE THRIVE WHERE WE LIVE.

WE ARE BUILDING FOR US AND FOR ALL BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR, LGBTQIA+, AND HISTORICALLY RESILIENT COMMUNITIES WHO ARE MARGINALIZED AND SILENCED.



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YANCEY CONSULTING



Kaid N Kolor