



STRATEGIC PLAN: 2018-2020

The purpose of this strategic plan is to help the New Hampshire Music Festival serve its communities by setting forth strategic goals and strategies to implement the mission and core goals expressed in the Festival's mission statement.

The New Hampshire Music Festival mission statement is as follows:

The New Hampshire Music Festival is a summer music festival presenting world-class performances in the greater New Hampshire Lakes Region of symphonic, choral, and chamber music that honor the traditions of classical music while also exploring new artistic paths. Strong collaborations with community partners are a hallmark of this important cultural institution, including educational programs for students of all ages.

The following three core goals follow from the Festival's mission statement:

1. Identify, attract, and retain superb artistic leadership and musicians, ensuring performances of the highest quality.
2. Perform new and recently composed symphonic works alongside traditional repertoire, highlighting the development of classical music to the present day.
3. Provide education programs for young people that foster intellectual and physical skills for music performance and build the symphony audience of the future.

This strategic plan will cover goals and strategies in five key areas, each of which is fundamental to the future of the Festival: (1) governance and administration, (2) revenue (sales, marketing, and fundraising), (3) finance (budgeting, expenses, and reserves), (4) programming and education, and (5) strategic planning.



GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Festival is governed by a Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Executive Director and Music Director (conductor).

The Board of Directors is headed by a Chair and has four primary committees: Finance, Development, Nominating/Governance, Artistic/Education. The Board may also have additional committees and sub-committees, as determined by the Board or the primary committees.

The Board of Directors has three primary functions. First, it is the ultimate governing and planning body of the Festival, responsible for hiring and evaluating the Music Director and the Executive Director, as well as reviewing and approving budgets and financial statements, and developing, modifying and implementing the Festival's mission and strategic plan. Second, the Board is a significant source of fundraising for the Festival, both as a source of individual donations and through Board members soliciting donations from friends, associates, and business and social contacts. Third, the Board helps produce some of the key fundraising activities.

It is the Festival's goal to recruit members of the Board who have the skills necessary for carrying out each of the Board's primary functions; in other words, individuals who are strong in social organizing and event production, those who have strong business, financial, or legal skills, and others who are capable of making substantial donations and encouraging others to do the same. Although it is not necessary to allocate a specific number of Board "slots" to each skill set (many Board members will have more than one skill set), it is necessary to have a Board that, in the aggregate, is strong in all three areas, with all members having a passion for music. It should be noted that there are two permanent Board slots for musicians as voting members, reflecting the value that the Festival places on transparency and collaboration.

Next, it is essential to the future of the Festival that it have a committed and active Board of at least 20 members, representing a cross-section of communities in which the Festival is present, which is a significant increase from the number of Board members it has had in most past periods. The Festival is too complex an organization, with too great financial needs, to operate consistently with a smaller Board.

Thus, a strategic planning goal for the Festival must be to build the Board of Directors to a minimum of 20 members by the end of 2019 fiscal year. To do so, the Board must charge its Nominating/Governance Committee with the following responsibilities (recognizing that the future of the Festival depends significantly upon the success of the this committee in carrying out such responsibilities): (1) identify the motivators for, and the obstacles to, Board membership and develop a stakeholder list of potential Board candidates; (2) develop criteria for Board service in light of the skill sets set forth above; and (3) with the assistance of the entire Board, recruit, orient, incorporate, and retain sufficient members to achieve the increased Board membership that has been set as a strategic planning goal. In fulfilling the third responsibility (actual recruitment), the Nominating/Governance Committee (a) should consider the recruitment of Board members in connection with the Festival's business sponsorship program, encouraging



Board members from significant businesses that the Festival would like to encourage to become significant donors, and (b) should consider the recruitment of Board members in connection with the Festival's expansion of its geographic reach (for example, Wolfeboro).

REVENUE

The key component of the Festival's financial health is revenue. The key components of revenue are donations and grants, primarily individual donations, followed by business donations, sponsorships, and foundation and government grants. In turn, the key component of individual donations is the leadership of donations by Board members. Thus, revenue is tied to having an effective Board of significant size. Although the Festival's development efforts are spearheaded by the Executive Director and the Board's Development Committee, such efforts must be the responsibility of all members of the Board and staff and must engage all Board members up to their level of skill and ability.

Industry-wide, ticket sales typically cover only 20% to 30% of the costs of operating an organization like the Festival. Although ticket sales are not the most crucial revenue item, they do reflect whether the Festival is fulfilling its mission to serve the surrounding community. Thus, the ability to generate substantial ticket sales is fundamental not only to revenue generation, but also to carrying out the Festival's mission. In turn, carrying out its mission successfully is fundamental to raising the individual, business, governmental, and foundation donations that are the dominant revenue sources. Therefore, the Festival's goal, beginning with the 2019 season, should be to fill its Plymouth performance space to 100% capacity (excluding, for this purpose, complimentary tickets provided to major donors and musicians) with paying audience members for each of the Festival's performances. For other performance venues (for example, Wolfeboro), a goal for ticket sales will be established in advance of each fiscal year.

In order to maintain and increase ticket sales, the Festival, primarily through its staff and the Development Committee, aims to engage in a continuous marketing effort designed to build the Festival's brand. The brand is the vision stated in the opening sentence of the Festival's mission statement, combined with the Festival's commitment to "performances of the highest quality," and its fundamental dual goals: (1) performance and education, and (2) new and traditional music.

In order to build its brand, the Festival must continue to produce high quality marketing materials, with signature logo, emphasizing its unique vision, as well as develop programming (to be discussed later) to increase its presence beyond its home base in Plymouth.

In addition, the Festival utilizes the unique talents of its key staff members by actively scheduling community interactions and exposure for the Chair, Music Director, and Executive Director, recognizing that they are the "face" of the Festival to much of the community.



Conveying the Festival's mission and goals to the wider community should be a part of their job descriptions and functions.

It is the Festival's goal to increase its younger audience through educational programs, as well as continuing to build bridges to Plymouth State University through targeted marketing and cooperative efforts with the University.

The Festival's major fundraising goal is to increase donations (individual, business, government, and foundation) by at least 15% per year over each of the 2018-2020 fiscal years. The Board and Festival staff will work to diversify and broaden the Festival's sources of income over this same period.

In connection with raising and increasing individual donations, the Festival will continue to support the Advisory Council, consisting of past and potential donors, past Board members, and other significant friends of the Festival. Recognizing the importance of the Advisory Council, the Board will appoint a Board member or Board subcommittee to serve as the Board liaison to the Advisory Council and to assist the Festival staff in working with the Advisory Council. In addition, the Board will consider ways in which the Advisory Council can become more directly involved with the goals of this strategic plan.

To further encourage individual and other donations, the Festival will solicit season sponsors, program sponsors, soloist sponsors, player sponsors, and commission sponsors. Sponsors are provided special recognition both at Festival events and through written acknowledgements in the Festival's marketing materials.

In order to further increase individual donations, the Festival, through the Development Committee, has initiated and will continue to support a legacy program to encourage and facilitate testamentary gifts, as well as donations through charitable remainder trusts and similar vehicles.

The Festival seeks to increase business donations through business sponsorships and other activities. To do so, the Festival will need to increase its connections to significant local businesses (for example, major banks, other financial institutions, tourism enterprises, and others), to determine their needs and desires regarding business sponsorships and donations, and to develop specific programs to meet those needs and desires. In addition, the Board should explore business sponsors having a representative Board member.

Though somewhat constrained by the Festival's semi-rural environment, the Festival will continue to actively solicit and apply for foundation and government grants. This shall be the primary responsibility of the Festival staff, with the assistance of the Development Committee.



FINANCE

There are two strategic planning goals in the area of finance. First, the Festival aims to operate annually with breakeven or positive net operating income and cash flow. Debt, except in extraordinary circumstances, is to be incurred only with Board approval, on a temporary basis, and with a clear and achievable method of repayment.

Second, the Festival aims to generate sufficient positive cash flow over the current and three succeeding fiscal years (2018, 2019, and 2020) such that by the start of the 2021 fiscal year it will have established a reserve fund of at least \$150,000. Such reserve fund would be used to give greater flexibility in artistic planning and to cover any future unanticipated cash shortfalls.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee, working with the Executive Director and staff, to develop annual budgets for the Festival. The budgets are in writing and approved by the full Board prior to the start of the fiscal year. In addition, the Finance Committee reviews financial statements monthly during the fiscal year and projects on a continuous basis whether or not the Festival is meeting budget projections.

PROGRAMMING AND EDUCATION

The Festival's mission statement contains three fundamental tenets: world-class performance of symphonic, choral, and chamber music; educational programs for students of all ages; strong collaborations with partners in the communities in which it performs.

The Festival carries out its purpose through its programming, educational, and community outreach activities. Moreover, programming plays a major role in the ability of the Festival to expand its audience and raise revenue. With its dual emphasis on traditional repertoire and new music, the Festival must build trust in its audience that the "proper" balance between the old and the new will be achieved and that the audience will be eager to continue to attend its concerts.

It must be the Festival's goal to grow by expanding the performance opportunities of the orchestra and chamber music ensembles. The Festival has already embarked on a growth strategy to expand performances in Wolfeboro and Music in the Mountains and to test other possible performance venues. Multiple performances of the same program could increase revenue relative to both rehearsal time and any commission costs. Thus, the Festival has set a goal that starting with the 2020 season, all of its orchestra concerts and a significant number of its chamber concerts will be performed both in Plymouth and in Wolfeboro.

The Festival focuses its educational mission on students in school systems north of Concord, as well as increasing the opportunities for young people to be exposed to the concert hall. The Festival will continue the Carnegie Hall Link Up program (which involves 3rd to 5th



grade students) as a core offering to 1000 students in 2018, 1500 students in 2019, and 2000 students in 2020, including curriculum development for their participating teachers. In addition, the Festival may consider finding one or more assessment measures with which to quantify and report on the actual impact of its educational programs on individual students: for example, the numbers who take up a musical instrument in the higher grades, test scores, and the effects on classroom behavior.

As part of its commitment to mentoring young conductors, the Festival is continuing the tuition-based New England Choral Institute at the New Hampshire Music Festival: a ten-day resident program for professional and advanced amateur singers and conducting students. Although its initial focus has been on choral conducting, a goal is to expand the Institute to include orchestra conducting students. This is an important collaboration involving Festival musicians, professional soloists, and the staff of the Plymouth State University Music and Theater Department.

The Festival is committed to continuous improvement in music performance, operations, and overall management with respect to its music director, executive leadership, and orchestra membership. Such commitment involves a further commitment to offering competitive total compensation; engaging the full roster of musicians consistently throughout each season; fostering open, transparent communications and a sense of collaboration; and creating a work environment that supports the recruitment of the finest talent.

Finally, the Festival, to build its brand and increase exposure, will explore the feasibility of producing a CD or other audio/visual reproduction vehicle. This will require the Board, Executive Director, and Music Director to: (1) determine the location and extent of the Festival's existing archival recordings; (2) explore potential recording locations; (3) determine recording costs; (4) evaluate the availability of grants to support a recording and write grant requests; and (5) plan a recordable repertoire, including Festival commissioned works, as well as other new works and compositions from the traditional repertoire.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

This strategic plan is only one chapter in what must be viewed as an ongoing process of strategic planning to be carried out primarily by the Board. To create such a process, strategic planning must be made a formal scheduled activity of the Board. Plan goals must be reviewed at least annually, and the strategic plan modified as necessary. In addition, as part of the process, the Board must consider succession planning for key positions, including the Executive Director, the Music Director, and the Chair of the Board. The full Board should review and approve at least annually the then current strategic plan and any proposed amendments.



SUMMARY OF MEASURABLE STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS

1. Build the Board of Directors to at least 20 members by the end of the 2019 fiscal year.
2. Beginning with the 2019 season, fill the Festival's performance venues in Plymouth with paying audience members to 100% capacity for each of the Festival's performances (excluding complimentary tickets for major donors and musicians). For other performance venues (for example, Wolfeboro), a goal for ticket sales will be set forth in advance of each fiscal year.
3. Increase donations (individual, corporate, government and foundation) by at least 15% per year over each of the 2018-2020 fiscal years.
4. Operate annually with breakeven or positive net operating income and cash flow, with debt, except in extraordinary circumstances, incurred only with Board approval, on a temporary basis, and with a clear and achievable method of repayment.
5. Generate sufficient positive cash flow over the current and three succeeding fiscal years (2018, 2019, and 2020) to establish a \$150,000 reserve fund by the start of the 2021 fiscal year, with the reserve fund targeted to cover any future unanticipated cash shortfalls and to allow for increased flexibility in artistic planning.
6. Starting with the 2020 season, all orchestra concerts and a significant number of chamber concerts will be performed both in Plymouth and in Wolfeboro.
7. Continue the Carnegie Hall Link Up program, with enrollment increasing from 1000 students in fiscal year 2018, to 1500 students in fiscal year 2019, to 2000 students in fiscal year 2020.

Fulfillment of the above strategic goals will ensure that the Festival remains a robust and thriving organization that will continue into the future to accomplish its stated mission and three core goals. It is anticipated that as part of each annual review of this Strategic Plan, the Board, as it thinks appropriate, may establish new strategic goals, and may modify certain already-established strategic goals, including by extending the time period for their achievement.