

ATLANTA BALLET

STRATEGIC PLAN
FISCAL YEARS 2020–2024

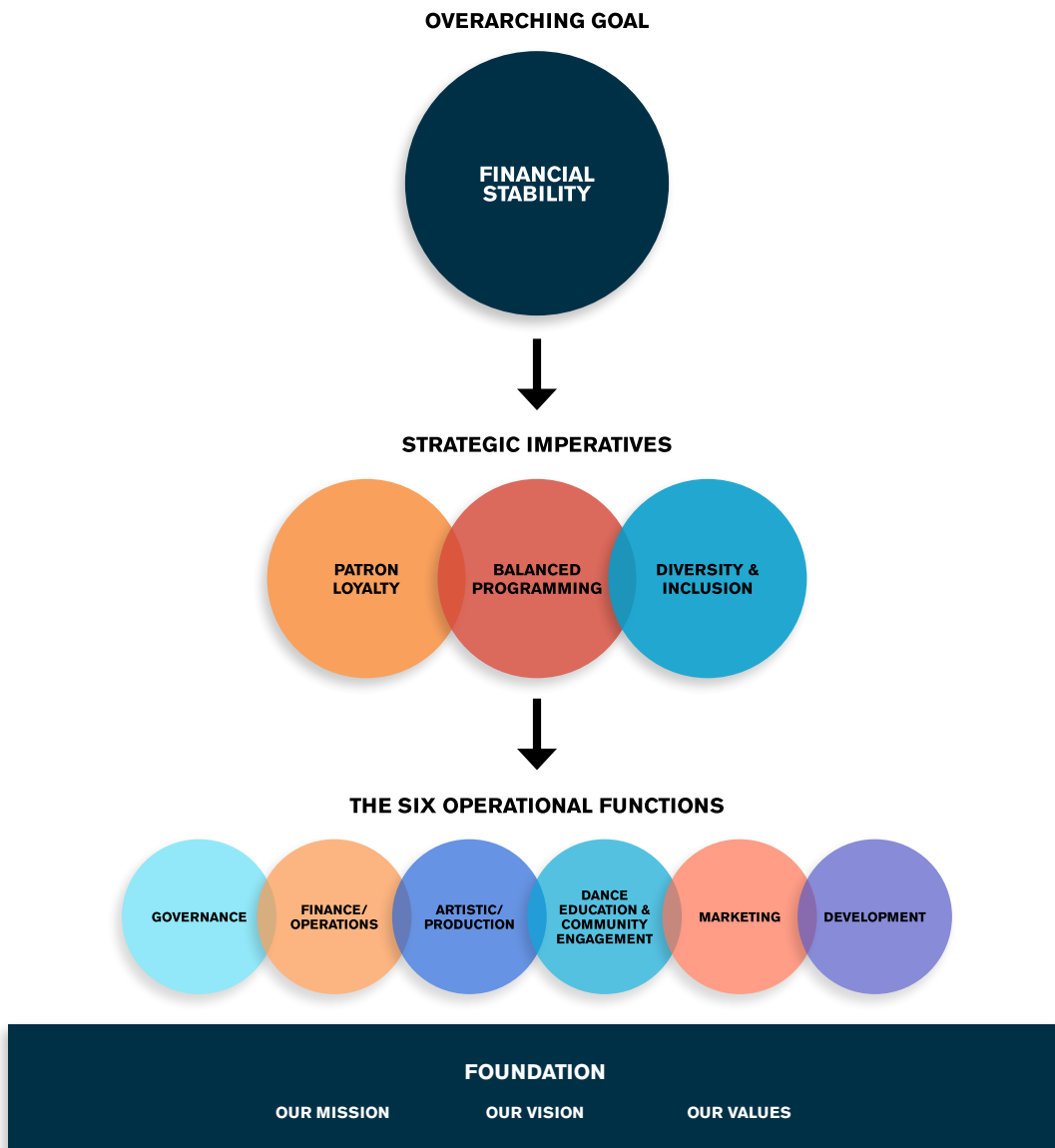
PREFACE

Emanating from Atlanta Ballet’s mission, vision and values, and driven by one overarching goal, this plan serves as an outline of its overall purpose and provides clarity, direction and focus for the organization’s future.

Atlanta Ballet believes that there are three strategic imperatives that are right for the organization and can lead it to achieve that crucial, overarching goal. Those strategic imperatives, however, can only become tangible and well-executed through six operational functions that lay out the specific objectives and metrics of each department. These operational functions are data-driven, action-oriented and measurable, and all departments within Atlanta Ballet must unitedly act upon them in order to bring the strategic imperatives to life.

With mission, vision and values acting as a solid foundation, and the overarching goal as an unwavering beacon, the three strategic imperatives and the six operational functions must be viewed as completely interconnected and interdependent. One element is incomplete and inadequate without the others, and this plan will consistently reflect that dynamic synergy, which is vital to the organization’s success.

The graphic illustration below portrays the architecture of this plan:



OUR MISSION

Atlanta Ballet's mission is to enrich the community by sharing the power and joy of dance -- inspiring its audiences with the highest caliber of artistic excellence on stage, empowering its students through superior dance education, and broadening the reach and impact of dance through active community engagement.

OUR VISION

Atlanta Ballet's vision is to be celebrated globally as one of the premier companies in the world of dance, recognized for its distinctive dancers, rich and diverse repertoire, respected stature in the Atlanta region, abiding commitment to diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization, and notable impact on dance appreciation and education throughout the community.

OUR VALUES

UNCOMPROMISING INTEGRITY IN PURSUIT OF OUR MISSION

Our passion for dance is what drives us. The deep respect we hold for our artists and audiences, teachers and students, and the art of dance dictates that we hold ourselves, and those around us, to the highest standards in all that we do.

PLACING THE PATRON AT THE CENTER OF OUR UNIVERSE

Our purpose is to enrich the lives of our patrons, inspire them, broaden their horizons, and lift them higher. Our patrons in turn inspire us to reach new levels of excellence. Without them, we could not exist.

UNDERSTANDING AND EMBRACING THE CRITICAL INTERSECTION BETWEEN ARTIST AND PATRON

The synergy between our artists and our patrons completes a virtuous circle that encompasses the very core of our success. The performer and the teacher are incomplete without the audience and the student.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We endeavor to create a space for everyone in our organization to feel respected, embraced, and celebrated for our differences, and to build a community that appreciates each individual for their contributions regardless of race, color, gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, religion or sexual orientation.

MUTUAL RESPECT & TRUST

We embrace the basic human need for dignity that resides in us all. We respect our co-workers, and we trust each other to act at all times in the best interest of our art, our organization and our community.

COLLABORATION & COOPERATION

We place a premium on the value of working together. We believe that more can be accomplished when the creative power of inclusion is unleashed on challenges and opportunities, both large and small.

CONSTRUCTIVE DISAGREEMENT

All of the other values we hold to be true will ultimately ring hollow without an environment that encourages individuals to respectfully challenge ideas from wherever they may emanate. Silence is neither a friend of invention, nor is it a path to progress and excellence.

HAVING FUN

We have chosen this work because we love it. We can have a sense of humor in the most stressful situations and we can enjoy the most daunting challenges because we thrive on finding their solutions.

OVERARCHING GOAL

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Throughout the past few years, Atlanta Ballet has made enormous strides in the quality and variety of its artistic offerings, the curriculum and level of the pre-professional and professional dance training, and the professionalism of our administrative function. This has translated to an image of consistently high level artistry for the organization, as well as an overall aura of success.

The results of this artistic and organizational progress are beginning to show in the areas of audience size and diversity, as well as donor participation and Centre enrollment. The strategies presented in this plan are designed to help accelerate those trends, as they will eventually become the major forces contributing to managed growth and financial stability.

Performing arts organizations around the world are – by their very nature – not economically viable on earned income alone. They are often considered analogous to small businesses or start-ups, in the sense that many are undercapitalized. Atlanta Ballet is now in a position of strength that will allow it to pursue the financial underpinnings that will lead to financial stability, and eventually, financial sustainability.

Financial stability is ultimately a function of well-planned and well-executed strategic program initiatives, marketing and fundraising, as well as a systematic approach to financial planning. The systematic and sequential approach recognized as best practice is:

1. Ensure that annual operating revenues exceed expenses on a reasonably reliable recurring basis each year.
2. Build working capital to a level that will allow the organization to manage the inevitable cash flow variances throughout the year without external short-term borrowing.
3. Build cash reserves for risk and opportunity, facilities and equipment, change and recovery.
4. Build an initial endowment that is at least equal to the annual operating expenses, and eventually two-times or more.

Annual Budget

While, on an accrual basis, Atlanta Ballet has shown an operating surplus in its annual audited financial statements for the past five years, operating cash has been a lingering concern. As a first step in addressing this issue, Atlanta Ballet's Board of Trustees has adopted a policy of balancing each fiscal year's budget on a cash basis beginning with FY20, and has committed to continuing with this practice each subsequent year. This allows the entire organization to focus on cash results, without the distractions of the various elements of accrual and the idiosyncrasies of nonprofit accounting. The intent of this approach is to turn any annual surpluses into gradually building cash reserves while eliminating any lingering remnants of a structural deficit.

Working Capital Reserves

Having established the ongoing discipline of a budget balanced on cash, the ebb and flow of cyclical operating cash needs throughout the fiscal year will invariably remain due to the nature and rhythm of a ballet company's fundamental operation, which is undeniably its production of *The Nutcracker*. Most of the organization's annual income and related cash comes in throughout the month of December, but most of the cash outlays are needed in the fall months leading up to *The Nutcracker* performances. The initial goal for a working capital reserve, that is borrowed from and repaid each year, is \$2 million. That need will eventually increase, however, proportionate to increases in the annual operating budget.

Cash Reserves for Risk and Opportunity, Facilities and Equipment, Change, and Recovery

Cash reserves to allow for unexpected expenses, equipment failure and unforeseen opportunities is the next most important step to financial stability. The Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF), a national organization established to assist and educate nonprofit organizations in financial management, recommends the combination of all net liquid assets be no less than an amount equal to six months of operating expenses. For Atlanta Ballet, that amount would currently be approximately \$6 million (including the \$2 million need for a working capital reserve). Initially, however, the priority is to build a Recovery Fund of \$1 million. This would help to prepare the organization for at least some of any potential unexpected, unbudgeted circumstances that might be beyond the control of the organization, and it would help to protect the organization from an adverse impact on the operation.

Endowment

Atlanta Ballet's current endowment is \$1.5 million. This is about 12.5% of the current annual operating budget. The national average for ballet companies is around 128%, but that is skewed by the inclusion of large companies, most notably New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and Houston Ballet. The average among all of the other companies is around 49%. In order to have an endowment equal to at least the size of our current annual budget of \$12 million, an additional \$10.5 million would be necessary. Just to match the national average of ballet companies (minus the above mentioned outliers) would require an additional amount of just under \$4.5 million in the endowment.

Building the endowment to the size of our operating budget and net liquid assets to an amount equal to six months of operating expenses is a longer-term endeavor. The priorities for the arc of this plan are:

1. maintain an annual budget balanced on cash;
2. eliminate all debt;
3. build a Working Capital Reserve of \$2 million; and
4. build a Recovery Fund of \$1 million

Finally, the strategies employed in this plan are designed to produce ever-increasing revenue through growth of Atlanta Ballet's patron base. This is the critical foundation for enduring institutional growth and sustainability.

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

BALANCED PROGRAMMING

Atlanta Ballet's artistic vision and strategy revolve around the concept of balanced programming. This means that – in each performance season – the Company will present the highest level of dancing, choreography and theatrical elements, in addition to a wide variety of genres, so that there is – literally – something for everyone to enjoy. A rich and diverse repertory also positions Atlanta Ballet well for an eventual touring initiative that will be embraced in the future as a strategy to further build the stature of the company worldwide.

Specifically, this translates to classical and contemporary works presented in either a full-length or mixed repertory program format.

Performance seasons will include:

- A. New works**, which are world premieres commissioned or co-commissioned by Atlanta Ballet so that we can build a signature repertory, with which we are identified, and which distinguishes Atlanta Ballet's "brand" in the world of dance.
- B. Works new to Atlanta Ballet**, which are already existing but not in Atlanta Ballet's active repertoire.
This will include:
 - a.** Iconic masterworks created by some of the world's greatest choreographers, having withstood the test of time and considered part of the standard ballet repertory.
 - b.** Works by today's choreographers that are the best representation of what is being produced in our time and which are compatible with Atlanta Ballet's aesthetic and artistic identity.
- C. Works in Atlanta Ballet's active repertory** that have resonated with Atlanta audiences and will help to continue the artistic growth of our dancers.
- D. Commissioned works by female and choreographers of color**, which will play a part in demonstrating Atlanta Ballet's authentic commitment to diversity and inclusion on-stage, and further fuel both audience growth and patron loyalty at home.

Balanced programming is at the core of Atlanta Ballet's continued success. A brilliant company of dancers performing a wide range of great work is fundamental to audience satisfaction, and audience satisfaction is the absolute precursor to patron loyalty.

Balanced programming will be implemented during the artistic planning process and measured through several metrics. Clearly, the ratio of each genre presented both in a given season and as part of the longer five-year arc is important. Additionally, a measure of success for creating patron loyalty can be quantified via each performance's Net Promoter Score (NPS). These scores can be reviewed and evaluated in the artistic planning process to help position certain types of works to continually move toward an optimal programming plan. Finally, while audience satisfaction is key to subscriptions, donations and repeat buyers, a sharp focus on recognizable titles and resonating themes is an essential ingredient to attracting new ticket buyers. All of these elements, however, must be juxtaposed and integrated with the critical need to select repertoire and programs that allow Atlanta Ballet dancers to bolster their artistic growth while constantly expanding the horizons and expectations of Atlanta audiences.

PATRON LOYALTY

Patron loyalty is the most effective and lasting route to financial sustainability. With a large, loyal and growing base of subscribers, single ticket buyers, donors, and Centre students and parents that return year after year, the financial underpinnings of the institution will be secure and enduring.

In the performing arts, between 50% and 80% of revenue comes from patrons. (Patrons are defined as any individual having a financial transaction with the institution). Atlanta Ballet currently derives 50% of its total revenue from patrons.

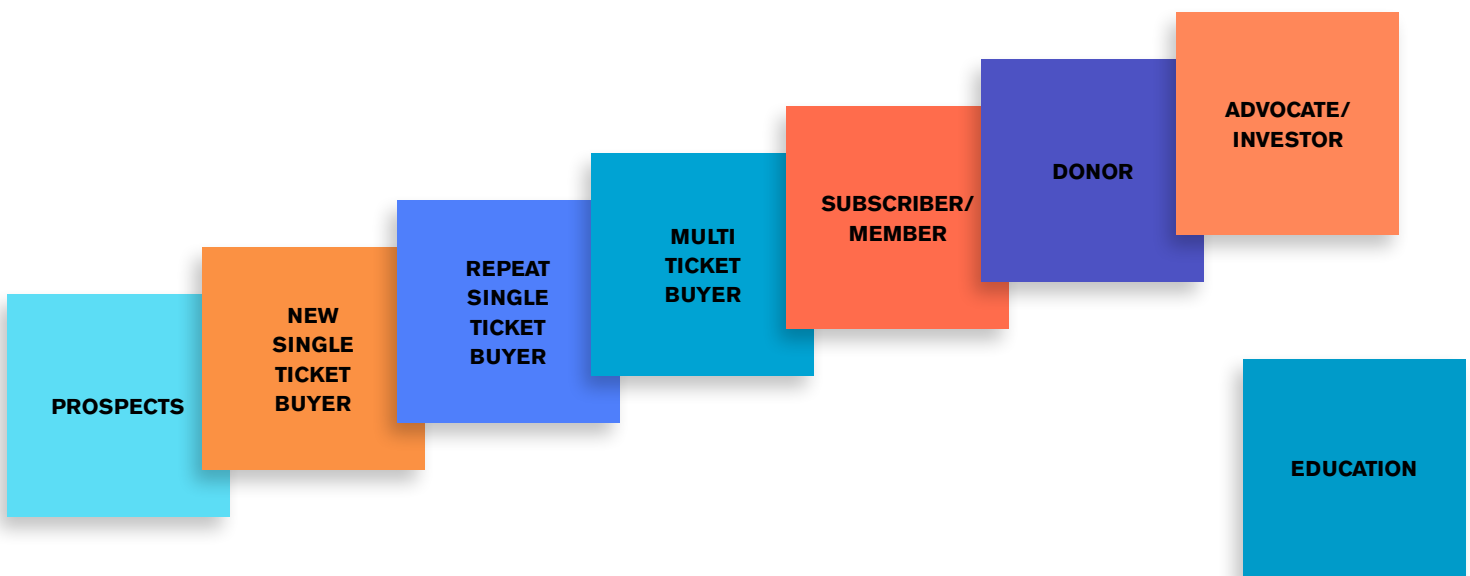
Patron loyalty can be viewed through a continuum that divides all patrons into three groups: advocates, buyers and tryers. These categories are derived through a scoring of a patron’s loyalty that takes into account four types of behavior:

- Recency = the more recent the purchase, the higher the score
- Frequency = the more activity per household, the higher the score
- Monetary = the more money spent per buyer type, the higher the score
- Growth = the more consistent the spend and growth year-over-year, the higher the score

These data points are blended into an algorithm resulting in a Patron Loyalty Index (PLI). Using the PLI, we can see the following information regarding Atlanta Ballet’s patrons, compared with national data:

| | <u>All US Performing Arts</u> | <u>All US Dance/Ballet Peers</u> | <u>Atlanta Ballet</u> |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| Advocates | 0.8% of households, representing 31% of all patron revenue. | 0.2% of households, representing 32% of all patron revenue. | 0.2% of households, representing 19% of all patron revenue. |
| Buyers | 6% of households, representing 27% of all patron revenue | 1.4% of households, representing 15% of all patron revenue | 0.7% of households, representing 11% of all patron revenue |
| Tryers | 93% of households, representing 42% of all patron revenue | 98.4% of households, representing 53% of all patron revenue | 99.1% of households, representing 71% of all patron revenue |

To further understand patron loyalty and the evolution of a patron, a common progression is illustrated below:



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Atlanta Ballet recognizes that there have been historical inequities in the field of ballet. Atlanta Ballet views diversity and inclusion as critical goals – of course, from a values-based perspective, but also as a business imperative as an organization in a city with a majority Black population that is currently underrepresented in Atlanta Ballet's patron base.

Atlanta Ballet's commitment to addressing these inequities and promoting greater diversity and inclusion at Atlanta Ballet is manifest in several foundational steps we have taken:

- first, in our participation in a multi-lateral national program called The Equity Project, a collaborative effort involving 20 major ballet companies committed to achieving diversity and inclusion in professional ballet;
- second, in our commissioning of a diversity and inclusion assessment to study Atlanta Ballet's past policies and practices, and to make specific recommendations with respect to diversity and inclusion; and
- third, in our launching of a Transformation Team, made up of representatives from all sectors of the Atlanta Ballet organization, to plan and monitor diversity and inclusion initiatives stemming from both the national Equity Project and our own internal diversity and inclusion assessment.

Atlanta Ballet's dancers are internationally and ethnically diverse, but do not reflect the racial diversity of Atlanta. Other parts of the Atlanta Ballet organization, to varying degrees, fall short of representing the diversity of Atlanta.

In general, Atlanta Ballet's goals for diversity and inclusion are:

1. for the composition of Atlanta Ballet to more fully reflect the diversity of our community;
2. for our performances to attract and resonate with Atlanta's diverse communities;
3. for everyone who works at Atlanta Ballet to feel valued for their contributions and competencies; and
4. for everyone in the Atlanta Ballet community, including students and their families at the Centre, to have a sense of belonging, regardless of race, color, gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic background, religion, or sexual orientation.

THE SIX OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

ARTISTIC

Objective: Announce Season in preceding February.

Metrics: 1. Create a planning timeline that starts in early spring with a working season and ends with a season announced in February.

Objective: Include live music in every main stage production.

Metrics: 1. Measure how many productions include a live music component.

Objective: Assign and review genres for each ballet from patron perspective.

Metrics: 1. Program at least one ballet from each quadrant every season.



Objective: Build a unique Atlanta Ballet Repertory through commissions.

Metrics: 1. Ensure an average of at least two world premieres each season and no less than an additional two works new to the company.

Objective: Include “iconic masterworks” in repertory.

Metrics: 1. Program at least one “iconic masterwork” each season.

Objective: Pursue programming that resonates with the diverse communities of Atlanta.

Metrics: 1. Make a tangible commitment to diversity in programming each season, through efforts to include not only performing artists of color, such as dancers and musicians, but also creative artists of color, such as choreographers, costume and lighting designers, and other significant influencers in the creative/production process.

Objective: Continue to make concerted efforts to globally audition diverse dancers.

Metrics: 1. Hold local open auditions each year.
2. Attend International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) or similar audition event each year.
3. Measure dancer demographics each year.

DANCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Objective: Create a new student retention plan that focuses on students with less than three years enrollment status.

Metrics: 1. Increase registration renewal by 2% a year with a goal of 10% growth over five years.

Objective: Create an Alumni strategy to engage graduates into ticket buyers.

Metrics: 1. 3% of Alumni into ticket buyers.

Objective: Create specific events for Adult Open Division (AOD) to become engaged in Atlanta Ballet performances.

Metrics: 1. 5% of AOD students into tickets buyers.

Objective: Maximize our ability to attract top talent with diverse backgrounds for Atlanta Ballet 2.

Strategies: 1. Produce one or more family series ballets with a total of four titles to be rotated.
2. Actively pursue venues for performances and tours.

Metrics: 1. Create one new family ballet in 2021.
2. Produce three Atlanta Ballet 2 performances a season by 2023.

Objective: Design a new pipeline initiative, Decade 2 Dance, to create bridges for diverse talent to enter the Academy, and Atlanta Ballet 2 with the ultimate goal of providing dancers of color with the training necessary to perform on our stage or that of other companies.

Strategies: 1. Increase selection of Community Engagement students of color in pipeline.
2. Promote full scholarship opportunities to students and families.
3. Hire, mentor and promote diverse classically trained faculty.
4. Continue to attend top competitions to recruit.
5. Create a summer program for younger dancers, designed specifically to funnel into the pipeline.

Metrics: 1. Add minimum of two new students of color per year.
2. Select two to six dancers of color for top level training in the Academy.
3. Increase budget for scholarship packages to between \$5,000 to \$8,000 per student.

Objective: Expand Community Engagement programs when able.

Metrics: 1. Add two in-school programs in Title I institutions.

MARKETING

Objective: Create a sustainable plan to grow the number of Premiere subscriber households.

Strategies:

1. Specific messaging to new-to-file subscribers.
2. Benefit messaging focused on converting partial season buyers into full season buyers.

Metrics:

1. Grow Premiere subscriber households by 2% a year with a goal of 10% growth over five years.

Objective: Build the funnel for subscriptions by moving single performance buyers into multi-buyers and multi-buyers to partial season buyers.

Strategies:

1. Targeted messaging with special offers.
2. Access to in-theatre experiences to deepen engagement.

Metrics:

1. Grow multi-buying households by 30% by FY24.

Objective: Activate ticket purchasing by parents with students and students enrolled in the Centre for more than three years.

Strategies:

1. Special Offers for enrollment level students to encourage purchase of at least two productions a season.
2. Subscription packages to encourage parents of Academy students to attend all productions in a season.
3. Special events and offers for AOD students to engage them in performances.

Metrics:

1. Grow Centre households purchasing two or more performances in a season to 15% by FY24.
2. Grow AOD households who purchase to 5% by FY24.

Objective: Retain and grow student base by focusing on re-enrolling students with three years or less in the Centre.

Strategies:

1. Special messaging to help with frequently asked questions.
2. Planned touch points throughout the year.

Metrics:

1. Increase registration renewal by 2% a year with a goal of 10% growth over five years.

Objective: Solicit audience feedback on programming and patron experience to help inform artistic planning.

Strategies:

1. Pull feedback from Net Promoter Score (NPS) surveys sent after each performance.

Metrics:

1. Deploy NPS survey after all performances.

Objective: Provide research on artists and programming that will provide a base to create more engaging patron material.

Metrics:

1. Research to be distributed to all departments by end of the preceding season.

Objective: Build new audiences for performances that reach a wider more diverse population.

Strategies:

1. Create highly diverse marketing materials.
2. Create a community relations program, partnering with diverse local organizations and/or leaders.

Metrics:

1. Track changes in demographic makeup of audiences using TRG Datacenter against Atlanta MSA baseline.

ADVANCEMENT

Objective: Increase the endowment through planned and deferred gifts equal to annual operating by FY24.

Strategies:

1. Identify a portfolio of active donors who meet planned giving prospect criteria.
2. Share the value of legacy gifts for long term sustainability.
3. Introduce income-based and asset-based planned giving methods.

Metrics:

1. Maintain an active portfolio of 50 planned giving prospects.
2. Total number of members in the Dorothy Alexander Society has increased.
3. Total value of endowment is equal to the annual operating budget.

Objective: Increase contributions by 15% to annual operating by FY24.

Strategies:

1. Plan, routinize and execute a sustained annual giving solicitation series to cultivate gifts up to \$10,000.
2. Identify and cultivate a portfolio of active and prospective donors with a capacity to gift over \$10,000.
3. Develop and maintain a stewardship program to recognize gifts and communicate impact.

Metrics:

1. Wealth assessment is completed and applied; donors and prospects are scored and prioritized.
2. Annual giving solicitation series is active with standard fall, holiday, calendar year-end, spring, and fiscal year-end appeals.
3. Standard stewardship program is active with acknowledgments, public recognition, pledge reminders, and donor communications.

Objective: Achieve \$5 million in emergency relief to stabilize working capital by FY23.

Strategies:

1. Conceive, plan, and execute a multi-pronged campaign to all donor segments – individuals, corporations, and foundations.
2. Maintain a sustained appeal program through digital marketing, social media, events, and personal interactions.
3. Develop and maintain a stewardship program to recognize gifts and communicate impact.

Metrics:

1. Quiet phase of campaign is launched in August 2020 to achieve commitments from Trustees and Advisory Council.
2. Public phase of campaign is launched in September 2020 to cultivate commitments from individuals, corporations, and foundations.
3. Sustained appeals and special events are implemented over a three-year period.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Objective: Provide a network of support and promote a culture of inclusion for all Atlanta Ballet employees.

Metrics:

1. Annual Town Hall meetings for internal communications.
2. Surveys for organizational climate assessment.
3. Comprehensive on-boarding for new employees, including peer to peer support.
4. Annual team building activity.

Objective: Provide internships for students of color to diversify the administrative pipeline.

Metrics:

1. Post internship opportunities broadly.
2. Offer at least one summer internship annually.

Objective: Encourage all of Atlanta Ballet to embody Diversity & Inclusion values beyond the walls of Atlanta Ballet, including staff, faculty, dancers, Board and Centre families.

Metrics:

1. Have a once-a-year commitment to complete a volunteer endeavor in our community as an Atlanta Ballet team.

Objective: Require that all open positions are posted to encourage a diverse applicant pool.

Metrics:

1. Post the position with language that includes Atlanta Ballet's Diversity & Inclusion values.
2. Post on career websites that are highly ranked for people of color.

BOARD GOVERNANCE

Objective: Enhance Trustee engagement.

- Metrics:
1. Increase percentage of trustees who attend at least 3 board meetings per year from 75% to 90%
 2. Increase average annual Board attendance and/or support of events from 53% to 80%
 3. Increase average annual subscriptions from 79% to 90%
 4. Plan and execute at least one new trustee orientation annually.
 5. Annual board self-assessment.

Objective: Advisory Council engagement.

- Metrics:
1. Plan and execute one dedicated advisory council interactive session per year with a topical agenda.

Objective: Build an increasingly larger, high-performing board, dedicated to the art form of ballet, who will sustain and further the mission of Atlanta Ballet.

- Strategies:
1. Identify a portfolio of prospective Trustees that meet criteria.
 2. Include comprehensive prospect profiles to qualify a prospect and support the decision process.
 3. Conduct activities to introduce, discuss and ultimately invite a prospect to serve.

- Metrics:
1. Increase Board from 34 to 60 members.
 2. Increase average annual board giving from \$11,500 to \$15,000, maintaining a minimum of \$10,000.
 3. Maintain an active portfolio of 25 prospective Trustees.
 4. Achieve five introductions per quarter.
 5. Achieve four invitations for board service per year.
 6. Recruit trustees who fill needed skill gaps.

Objective: Continuing Board development.

- Metrics:
1. Provide no less than four mission-oriented presentations per year at board meetings.
 2. Provide two in-depth business and/or general topic presentations per year.
 3. Plan and execute one board retreat no less than every two years.

Objective: Continue to build a diverse board and advisory council that is reflective of our community.

- Metrics:
1. Make good faith efforts for your over year increase in representation of board members who are people of color, modeling our board more closely to the demographics of the community we serve.
 2. Recruit and increase percentage of people from all industry sectors and communities of the metro Atlanta area for Advisory Council, regardless of ability to give.

ATLANTA BALLET HISTORY

Atlanta Ballet was founded over eight decades ago by dance visionary Dorothy Moses Alexander (1904-1986). Miss Dorothy had a dream of bringing quality ballet to the Atlanta community. The result was the Dorothy Alexander Dance Concert Group - the first step in the regional ballet movement that swept the nation. In 1946, the Company, now named Atlanta Civic Ballet, became the first dance company in the nation to help fund a symphony. The season's annual proceeds were donated to the Atlanta Youth Symphony, which would later become Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

In 1958, Miss Dorothy invited Robert Barnett, a soloist with the acclaimed New York City Ballet and a protégé of George Balanchine, to join the Company as a principal dancer. In 1962, a year after her retirement, Barnett was named artistic director and introduced many Balanchine masterworks into the repertoire, including *The Nutcracker*. For more than 30 years, Mr. Barnett expanded Miss Dorothy's dream of excellence.

John McFall became Atlanta Ballet's third artistic director in 1994. Mr. McFall's imagination and innovative vision brought contemporary modern dance premieres, numerous new full-length ballets, and several world premiere productions to Atlanta. His pioneering spirit inspired collaborations with Big Boi of OutKast, Indigo Girls, The Red Clay Ramblers, the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church Choir, and the Michael O'Neal Singers. Mr. McFall created an ensemble company of extraordinary professional dancers from every corner of the world, including Uruguay, Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines, Brazil, Columbia, Australia, Canada, and the United States. He provided the world's most innovative choreographers, including Christopher Hampson, Twyla Tharp, Helen Pickett, and Violette Verdy, with an artistic home while exposing Georgia audiences to exciting new works.

Upon John McFall's retirement in 2016, Gennadi Nedvigin was named Atlanta Ballet's fourth artistic director in the Company's then 87-year history. Mr. Nedvigin joined Atlanta Ballet after an illustrious dance career that included his training at the famed Bolshoi Ballet Academy and nineteen seasons as a principal dancer with San Francisco Ballet. As artistic director, he presents a varied repertory that reintroduces some of the finest classical and neoclassical works in existence, while also bringing in new works from the most sensational and sought-after choreographers in the world. He uses his vast experience to nurture the Company, helping the dancers achieve the highest level of artistry, and elevate the national and international profile of Atlanta Ballet.

Atlanta Ballet is the oldest ballet company in America, the largest self-supported arts organization in Georgia, and the official Ballet of Georgia. Atlanta Ballet's eclectic repertoire spans the history of ballet, highlighted by the most beloved classics and the most inventive originals. Although a renowned leader in the promotion and education of dance, Atlanta Ballet's roots have been firmly grounded in the community and playing a vital role in the city's cultural growth and revitalization.

The Company has also served as an ambassador for Atlanta nationally and internationally, performing around the globe - from the stages of Taipei in Taiwan to the Presidential Palace and the Sejong Cultural Arts Center in Seoul, Korea. In 1996, the Company performed during the Olympic Arts Festival/Cultural Olympiad, and, in 1999, Atlanta Ballet debuted in London, performing John McFall's enchanting *Peter Pan* as the centerpiece of Royal Festival Hall's millennium celebration. In 2013, Atlanta Ballet embarked on a two-week tour to China, where it was one of only two American dance companies represented at the National Ballet of China's inaugural "International Ballet Season."

In 1996, John McFall established the Centre for Dance Education (Centre) and identified Sharon Story as dean. The Centre is dedicated to nurturing young dancers while providing an outlet for adults to express their creativity through different courses. It also offers classes for children as young as two, an acclaimed pre-professional division called the Academy, and a spectrum of dance classes ranging from ballet to tap. Students enrolled in the Centre's programs enjoy opportunities to perform with the professional Company, and students receive first priority in casting for roles in *The Nutcracker*, as well as other productions. The Centre for Dance Education also prides itself on its renowned community programs. School programs have increased the spirit and grades of thousands of metro Atlanta schoolchildren. The Centre has been a tireless leader of dance education.

Through endeavors such as these, Atlanta Ballet continues Miss Dorothy's vision. Atlanta Ballet's commitment to dance education and performance has inspired audiences everywhere through the empowering joy of dance.

ATLANTA BALLET LEADERSHIP

GENNADI NEDVIGIN (Artistic Director), in February 2016, was named Atlanta Ballet's fourth artistic director in the Company's then 87-year history. Nedvigin, born in Rostov, Russia, began his training at age 5. At 10, he was accepted into the Bolshoi Ballet Academy. Upon graduating, he joined Moscow Renaissance Ballet, as a soloist, before he was invited to dance with Le Jeune Ballet de France in Paris. In 1997, while on tour in the U.S., San Francisco Ballet (SFB) Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson offered Nedvigin a soloist contract. After three years, he was promoted to principal dancer. While at SFB, Nedvigin won the International Competition's Erik Bruhn Prize (1999). He has also received three Isadora Duncan Dance Awards (2001, 2010 and 2017). Along the way, Nedvigin was fortunate to work with many world-renowned choreographers. In addition to his dancing career, Nedvigin also taught master classes and staged ballets in the U.S. and abroad before becoming an artistic director. Recently, Nedvigin sat on juried panels at the World Ballet Competition in Orlando, the International Ballet Competition held in Jackson, Mississippi, and the Youth America Grand Prix. Under Nedvigin's guidance, Atlanta Ballet has established an Academy training program, which includes a top-tier performance ensemble, Atlanta Ballet 2, representing his commitment to training for the next generation of professional dancers.

ARTURO JACOBUS (President & CEO) is in his 11th season with Atlanta Ballet. He was previously chief executive of Pacific Northwest Ballet and San Francisco Ballet, each for 10 years. He holds master's degrees in business administration, arts administration and human resources management, and he has completed management certificate programs at the University of Washington and Harvard Business School. Jacobus has served on executive boards for such arts organizations as Dance/USA, Washington State Arts Alliance, Northwest Development Officers' Association and California Arts Advocates. He has stayed actively involved in arts strategy and advocacy by chairing and sitting on panels for the city of Atlanta Office of Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts. Before becoming an arts executive, Jacobus served for 20 years as a bandmaster for the U.S. Navy, leading ensembles in Villefranche, France; Gaeta and Naples, Italy; and San Francisco. While stationed in Naples, under the Commander in Chief Allied Forces Southern Europe (CincSouth), he founded a 50-member NATO ensemble from the armies, navies and air forces of Italy, Greece, Turkey, the U.K. and the U.S.

SHARON STORY (Dean of the Centre for Dance Education) joined Atlanta Ballet after a professional dance career that spanned more than 20 years and included tenures with Joffrey Ballet, the School of American Ballet, Stars of New York City Ballet, Atlanta Ballet and 10 years with Boston Ballet. Her Boston Ballet tenure included international tours with Rudolf Nureyev. In 1996, along with her role as ballet mistress, Story became dean of the Centre for Dance Education (Centre), which has grown to become one of the largest dance schools in the nation. The Centre is nationally recognized for its programs and community initiatives. Under Story's direction, the Centre achieved accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD). She serves currently as president of the board of directors for NASD. Story received the 2015 Women Making a Mark Award from Atlanta Magazine and was featured in the ArtsATL Legacy Series 2018. She is committed to providing a noncompetitive atmosphere and access to dance education that is shaped by the community's needs, is innovative, and inspires the commitment and excellence that are the trademarks of Atlanta Ballet.

ATLANTA BALLET

Michael C. Carlos Dance Centre | 1695 Marietta Blvd NW | Atlanta, GA 30318 | atlantaballet.com