Franconia Sculpture Park
Strategic Plan 2025-2030

INTRODUCTION

In its 28th year, Franconia Sculpture Park has entered its third chapter with new Executive and Board leadership. After defining its core purpose (facilitating artist residencies, primarily through sculpture) and establishing a nationally-recognized home for contemporary art, Franconia turns towards developing systems of sustainability, allowing for continued growth on solid foundations.

GOALS

I. Operate a nationally-renowned artist residency program that brings different kinds of contemporary artists together to create new work at Franconia.
II. Create a transparent, renewing, and powerful operating system that pivots to collectively sharing responsibility in the ways Franconia runs.
III. Nurture local connections, leveraging Franconia's unique environment for practical learning.
IV. Steward and invest in the ways that Franconia sparks relationships with people.
V. Utilize the park's incredible breadth of capacity and continue to develop it.

VISION 2030

People seek Franconia Sculpture Park to connect with the best parts of being alive. Bustling with artists, schools, and families, every day at the park contains the raw energy of creation, the joy of connecting with others, and the relief of recognizing collective care for our complex world. New civic, political, and social forces are compared and contrasted with traditions and values deeply rooted in cultures, situating Franconia as a place of respite, a place of learning, and a place of power for those fighting to sculpt our world. This glow radiates throughout our region, not only through media and participation, but also through civic partnerships that share our strengths and (re)define communities.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Franconia has multiple, renewing income streams that allow for 3-year planning.
Franconia is represented in cities through its participation in local initiatives.
Franconia uses transparent strategy screens to make decisions, with the Board and with Staff.
Franconia's core residency programs are consistently offered, and publicized internationally.
Franconia has no capacity left idle by lack of financial investment.

Franconia's 2030 Strategic Goals & Vision: Detail

1. Operate a nationally-renowned artist residency program that brings different kinds of contemporary artists together to create new work at Franconia.
    a. Offer annual open calls for the park's most prominent opportunities.
    b. Ensure different kinds of artists are overlapping in residence.
    c. Provide the spaces, resources, and expertise necessary for artists to accomplish their best big ideas.
    d. Continue evaluating and experimenting with different kinds of residency programs that respond to both external forces and Franconia's unique position.
    e. Engage with organizations and leaders at the national and international levels, sharing what's working at Franconia and opening ourselves to best practices from the outside.

    VISION 2030: 5 Large Sculptures annually are created by Fellowship artists living in residence at Franconia for 2-4 month periods. 16 sculptures created by emerging artists-in-residence are 'planted' among new city-level sculpture walks in local communities. Flexible residencies for other kinds of artists bring diversity, depth, contrast, and enrichment throughout our programs, creating prominent and innovative intersections for artists and audiences alike. Just as seasons come and go, new artists are always living at Franconia, bringing new ideas and art practices to our community.

2. Create a transparent, renewing, and powerful operating system that pivots to collectively sharing responsibility in the ways Franconia runs.
    a. Councils: Artistic, Site, Funding. Collectively making decisions and taking action on the most important, relevant work of Franconia. Composed of community stakeholders. At least one member is a Board member who reports on the Council to the Board and ED. At least one member is a staff member who carries out/carries forward work to staff.
    b. Staff Management: Events, Volunteers, Education, Residency, Communication, Design, Visitor Services, Accounting/Bookkeeping, Grants, Donors. (Are there other functions/hubs for staff work?)
    c. Leverage AI and other contemporary technologies to efficiently operate, regularly evaluate, and provide clear pictures of the organization.

    VISION 2030: The garden of Franconia's mind is thriving, bursting with ideas that live in an ecosystem of contemporary thought, visible to the public just like a work of art. Anyone can see what the organization is working on, what it needs, and where it's headed. People want to both give and get out of coming along for the ride.

3. Nurture local connections, leveraging Franconia's unique environment for practical learning.
    a. Pair Franconia's Emerging Artist programs with local cities, businesses, and organizations (such as the Taylors Falls Sculpture Walk).
    b. Build participants' capacities for community organizing, self-representation, and navigating bureaucratic systems.
    c. Serve our rural constituencies in ways that help people, respond to the present, and build connections with values held in contemporary art.
    d. Create space for intersections between national leaders and local leaders through art, nature, and community development.

    VISION 2030: Franconia mints careers in public art for the next generation of artists through the ways we work with our audiences, local businesses, and governments. Participating artists leave Franconia ready to sustain their own practice. Other communities around the country reach out to Franconia to develop their own cross-sector partnerships, using the ingredient of culture to promote health, wellbeing, and understanding.

4. Steward and invest in the ways that Franconia sparks relationships with people.
    a. Provide interpretation in ways that are accessible at different levels, so people (and groups of people) may choose to lean in as far as they want.
    b. Share the park, hosting many different kinds of events, art forms, cultures, and organizations, attracting new audiences to connect with and at Franconia.
    c. Do more to welcome visitors through marketing, signage, and elevating the great work already happening here.
    d. Connect with Franconia's alumni community, providing opportunities to re-engage, support career continuity, and aggregate networks for future Franconia artists and programs.

    VISION 2030: People make Franconia buzz: you can't visit the park or attend an event without engaging with the people powering it. We do what other organizations think is impossible by multiplying everything we do with the best parts of ourselves. Franconia gives us the chance to hold hands with folks society tells us are strangers, and the work we share allows a different mode of reality to unfold.

5. Utilize the park's incredible breadth of capacity and continue to develop it.
    a. Fully occupy the residency house year-round: artists, arts organizations, cultural leaders, FSP allies & friends.
    b. Four-seasons workyard: add equipment and protection so artists may work year-round realizing their biggest dreams.
    c. Ensure ADA accessibility to all Franconia facilities: visitor center, 43-acre park, workyard, and residency house.
    d. Activate under-utilized spaces with what residents need, such as studio space and storage.

VISION 2030

Bold fundraising initiatives connect those wanting to change the world with those who have the power to do so at Franconia Sculpture Park. We honor our artists, staff, and volunteers so much that the world gets to know what's important to them. Reconciling with the true cost of capacity, we overcome engrained obstacles in our facilities by launching into capital and legacy giving. Fueling the work are new connections with philanthropists at the highest level, while inspiring all who have a relationship with Franconia to make supporting our mission proudly part of their lives.