



TEXTILE CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN

2022–2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4–24	2022 – 2027 Strategic Plan Goals & Strategies
25–26	2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan
27	Letter from the Board of Directors
28	Strategic Planning Process
29–30	Vision for 2027



MISSION

Textile Center’s mission is to honor textile traditions, promote excellence and innovation, nurture appreciation, and inspire widespread participation in fiber art.

DECLARATION OF ANTI-RACISM & COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION

To eliminate barriers that prevent anyone from appreciating and contributing to textile arts in their own unique and valuable way, Textile Center Board of Directors and Staff stand united with all racialized, marginalized, and underrepresented individuals. We affirm our identity as an organization that welcomes all in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, age, cognitive style, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical ability, and political or religious ideology. We are not only committed to speaking out but also to holding ourselves accountable to adjusting our own actions whenever we encounter racism, discrimination, or oppression.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Our mission is the foundation for our activities and decision making.
- We strive to provide an environment where everyone is accepted, valued, and respected, while fostering a strong sense of belonging for all individuals.
- We are committed to securing and investing resources well, in order to sustain Textile Center today and grow to serve future generations.



Art Speaks: Susan Iverson



Artwork by Alonzo Pantoja

GOALS

GOAL ONE | Nurture a culture of wellbeing

GOAL TWO | Explore diverse cultures and lives through learning about textile traditions and innovations

GOAL THREE | Support and inspire fiber artists, makers, and appreciators at all levels through classes, exhibitions, fellowships, retail sales, and collaboration

GOAL FOUR | Champion environmentally healthy and sustainable textile art practices

GOAL FIVE | Promote Textile Center's home as a national destination while expanding opportunities for online and off-site engagement



GOAL ONE

Nurture a culture of wellbeing

Why? Our world is knitted, woven, stitched, quilted, and beaded together. It is no coincidence powerful metaphors for linkage come from textile arts because connection is core to our field. For many, the act of making textile artwork is therapeutic. We believe Textile Center can be part of an interconnected solution for a healthy future.

GOAL ONE

Nurture a culture of wellbeing



Student in Teaching Artist Alonzo Pantoja's
Weaving as Collage class

KEY STRATEGIES

- Lead with inclusive principles to ensure all constituents, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, income, and disabilities have opportunities to thrive
- Prioritize affordability and accessibility of our program offerings
- Create a workplace infused with work/life balance and joy, ensuring our staff members receive compensation, benefits, time off, balanced workloads, and professional development in a manner that contributes to physical and emotional wellbeing

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- Our staff, board of directors, and pool of teaching artists, award winners, and presenting artists are more diverse as measured quantitatively and qualitatively
- Funds are secured to accomplish annual goals and allow for resilience in challenging times
- Salaries and benefits match the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits benchmarks, and staff report a healthy workplace environment
- Teaching artists and volunteers express happiness and fulfillment in their work with Textile Center
- Refresh Textile Center's brand identity to better reflect the image of our ever-evolving organization

GOAL TWO

Explore diverse cultures and lives through learning about textile traditions and innovations

Why? Textiles are infused with stories. By learning about and supporting our diverse local, national, and global textile traditions and innovations, we create an inclusive framework for community connection, empathy, and engagement.

GOAL TWO

Explore diverse cultures and lives through learning about textile traditions and innovations



Textile Arts Tour of Morocco

KEY STRATEGIES

- Raise curatorial vision for exhibitions, and expand opportunities for exhibiting artists to teach in our educational programs
- Engage locally, nationally, and internationally renowned artists and advisors to support our mission
- Expand international and domestic travel programs to strengthen Textile Center's ties to the world's leading fiber and textile artists
- Cultivate the library's collections of books and periodicals with a greater emphasis on global and folk-art textile traditions and innovations
- Collaborate with textile guilds to embrace our shared goal to inspire widespread participation in fiber art

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- Quantifiably increase engagement with Minnesota's diverse communities through our exhibitions, classes, retail shop, and library
- International and domestic tours focus on cultural textile traditions, nurturing friendships and partnerships. Financial support has been added for broader participation so that cost is not a barrier for participation
- Collaborations between Textile Center and textile guilds have been reimagined to help grow our regions' engagement with fiber art and diversity initiatives
- Refresh Textile Center's brand identity to better reflect the image of our ever-evolving organization

GOAL THREE

Support and inspire fiber artists, makers, and appreciators at all levels through classes, exhibitions, fellowships, retail sales, & collaboration

Why? For some, involvement with textile arts is an artistic pursuit and career; for others, textiles are embedded in preserving cultural traditions. Many view creating, collecting, or admiring textiles as a joyful hobby that brings personal fulfillment and wellbeing. We aim to proactively support individuals with a continuum of opportunities.



Visitors at the *Bananas for Bandanas* indigo dyeing event, sponsored by Prospect Park Co-op Legacy Fund

GOAL THREE

Support and inspire fiber artists, makers, and appreciators at all levels through classes, exhibitions, fellowships, retail sales, and collaboration



INTERLACE: Rug Hooking students and their work in progress

KEY STRATEGIES

- Expand the reach of our fiber art programs across Minnesota
- Establish more professional development opportunities for fiber artists and arts leaders dedicated to our field through support services, fellowships, residencies, and retail sales
- Serve all generations through community outreach with fiber art making experiences, ranging from youth engagement to creative aging

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- INTERLACE for older adults and the Youth Fiber Art Guild become statewide offerings through community partnerships
- We significantly expand our physical and online retail sales footprint in service to fiber artists
- Fiber art for all ages and cultures is a focus of our programming, so that Textile Center becomes an intergenerational resource for creative expression and engagement
- Adequate funding has been secured to grow programming



GOAL FOUR

Champion environmentally healthy and sustainable textile art practices

Why? Our planet's environment is in crisis. Sustainable textile practices and environmental stewardship are crucial in the face of waste and environmental toxins created by our field. We seek to inspire action, educate our community about the issues, and model helpful behavior.

Tracy Krumm and Tim of TIM+THOM work on a farm-to-fashion project in collaboration with North Star Farm Tour. Fabric was woven from fibers from nine Minnesota farms, and turned into garments that premiered in a runway show at Textile Center's 25th Anniversary Gala

GOAL FOUR

Champion environmentally healthy and sustainable textile art practices



Natural dyed yarn in Textile Center's Dye Lab

KEY STRATEGIES

- Maintain commitment to our Textile Garage Sale tradition to promote reuse and upcycling, as well as provide affordable materials to makers
- Focus an environmental lens on artistic programming, including exhibitions, lectures, classes, and retail shop
- Raise the profile of our A Garden to Dye For and related programs focusing on natural dyeing and other eco-friendly practices
- Build connections to the region's farmers and livestock growers, and promote support for locally grown/raised fiber resources
- Support efforts to encourage ways to extend the life of textiles in order to reduce its impact on the waste stream

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- Our carbon footprint is reduced in our facility through improved HVAC systems, LED lighting, as well as potentially tapping into the Towerside Innovation District's aquifer thermal energy storage energy system
- We have partnered with community-based environmental movements and programs
- Our efforts are expanded with the support of new environmentally focused funders

GOAL FIVE

Promote Textile Center's home as a national destination while expanding opportunities for online and off-site engagement

Why? We'd like more space and easier parking, and yet we love our vibrant neighborhood with its proximity to the university, hotels, food halls, and transit. Thanks to the vision of past leaders, we own our historic 1927 building with no mortgage. We encourage all to visit our lovely home (physical space) to see gallery shows, shop for textile arts, explore our library, and take classes. To complement our hub offerings, we'll enhance remote (off-site and online) programming to provide more opportunity for inclusion for those who prefer to connect with us online or through community partnerships.



Student in an offsite outreach class with their dyed fabric project

GOAL FIVE

Promote Textile Center's home as a national destination while expanding opportunities for online and off-site engagement



KEY STRATEGIES

- Maintain a home that is inclusive, accessible, and welcoming to all, and promote it as an exciting urban destination for fiber art
- Deliver more fiber art classes and outreach programs in community locations
- Build on the momentum created during the pandemic to produce more first-rate digital programs to serve a global audience by improving cyber infrastructure including website, digital spaces, online learning, and database integration

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS?

- Our home has become more accessible with investments in improved audio/visual systems
- Updated community spaces promote a comfortable atmosphere for congregating
- A program-driven plan guides our investment in physical and online infrastructure
- We have bolstered on-going partnerships and created new collaborations to offer Textile Center programs in other community locations
- Our leaders engaged in community efforts to create district parking solutions and increased safety and security in the neighborhoods surrounding our facility

Photo: Teaching Artist Laura Wennstrom teaches the class *Crumb Quilting* via Zoom from Textile Center's digital studio

2016 – 2021 STRATEGIC PLAN

Textile Center achieved the vision outlined in its ambitious 2016 – 2021 strategic plan despite the challenges we continue to face during a global pandemic. In 2021, Textile Center is a vital, vibrant epicenter for fiber art, artists, makers, and appreciators. Our organization improved its financial health, keeping us resilient during the pandemic.

Textile Center expanded program services to connect, support, and promote fiber artists and makers, including the launch of the McKnight Fellowships for Fiber Artists and INTERLACE creative aging workshops for older adults.

Before the pandemic, Textile Center was on pace to double the number of people served through our programs during the five years of this plan. We celebrated our 25th anniversary in 2019 with a festive gala, brought back the Spun Gold Awards, and explored the diverse world of textiles through international and domestic tours, including trips to Morocco, Japan, India, and Guatemala. Our Youth Fiber Art Guild program, now well established, has led to the development of more kit-based fiber art outreach programs for learners of all ages.

When Minneapolis became the epicenter of the nationwide protest movement against police brutality and racism in America following the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, Textile Center joined forces with Women of Color Quilters Network to create *We Are the Story*. The result was a series of exhibitions and a book (“We Are the Story: A Visual Response to Racism”) by Textile Center’s National Artist Advisory Council member Carolyn L. Mazloomi. This initiative garnered international acclaim.

As we launched our 2016 – 2021 plan, our “Founders & Friends” made multi-year pledges to a fundraising campaign that launched a new era of programmatic growth and financial health. Thanks to our donors, members, class attendees, and shoppers, we have grown sustainable streams of revenue to support our operating needs.

We dedicated much time and energy related to the puzzle of our facility needs. We acquired a parking lot at 3018 University Ave. SE, transformed the Community Gallery to the renamed Mary Giles Gallery, and made incremental building improvements. The pandemic held back our momentum in these final years, however, the work will carry on.

Our 2016 – 2021 Strategic Plan resulted in many successes, and our new 2022 – 2027 plan sets the stage for a dynamic future for fiber art.

Textile Center has helped me expand my knowledge and experiences with fibers and provided inspiration and motivation by connecting with others who share the same passion. These relationships have helped me think of myself as an artist.

”



Photo: 3 for JH by Mary Giles

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As Textile Center prepared to embark on a strategic planning process in early 2020, our Board and Staff gathered in a facilitated retreat and learned to set aside “limited thinking” in order to dream about an exciting future. A few weeks later we faced daunting challenges thrust upon us by a global pandemic. Our retreat prepared us to trust our collective wisdom and to embrace the future with a can-do spirit that has kept our organization resilient and thriving during an era of immense change.

As we look to 2027, we expect our world to remain unpredictable. We know, in this time of disruption, we’ll have to be nimble with our strategies and will keep them updated on an annual basis. For these five years, we’ve established goals, our reasoning for the goals, and our most current thinking on success measures. This plan, with its embedded core principles, will serve as our guide and remain a constant reference point.

Textile Center’s roots are anchored in an understanding about diversity. Until the 1970s, fiber arts were considered “women’s crafts” and often overlooked. Our founders, many of them feminist activists, envisioned a welcoming home to support and honor all textile traditions and the skill, artistry, cultural traditions, and community that accompanies the fiber arts. As we look to the future, Textile Center commits to an even greater level of inclusion.

Our vision is informed by our belief that our world is deeply interconnected, and Textile Center can play a role in leading us to a just and loving future infused with creativity. Please join us!

– Textile Center Board of Directors

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

This strategic planning process began with a pre-pandemic retreat in 2020. We then paused the active planning as we responded to immediate needs. However, this first retreat formed the basis of our vision. In early 2021, we returned to the active phase of planning with many long conversations with staff and board, individual interviews and conversations with dozens of stakeholders, a focus group with guild leaders, and an in-depth open community survey to which 1,232 people responded. We listened, learned, and appreciate the deep engagement from our constituents. This plan was approved on November 17, 2021, by the Board of Directors.

Special thanks to:

- Strategic Planning Committee: Maggie Dayton, Sarah Haroon, Karl Reichert, Mariana Shulstad, and Jeffrey J. White
- Textile Center Board of Directors
- National Artist Advisory Board Members: Pat Hickman and Carolyn L. Mazloomi
- Staff members as of November 17, 2021: Katie DeCosse, Mia Finnamore, Nancy Gross, Debbie Johnson, Tracy Krumm, Nancy Mambi, Sarah Peterson, Karl Reichert, Chloe Russell, Jayne Usery
- 2020 Visioning Retreat Facilitator: Vickie Benson
- Strategic Planning Guide: Jocelyn Hale, MillerHale Associates

VISION FOR 2027

In 2027, Minnesota is internationally recognized as an exciting hub for fiber art and textiles, thanks to Textile Center devoting its full focus and power into creating space for inclusive, imaginative programming that uplifts and inspires a diverse and ever-expanding family of artists, makers, and enthusiasts.

Committed to nurturing a culture of wellbeing, Textile Center lives up to its commitment to eliminate barriers that prevent anyone from appreciating and contributing to textile arts in their own unique and valuable way. It provides an environment where everyone is accepted, valued, and respected, while fostering a strong sense of belonging for all individuals. The make-up of the staff and board of directors reflects this commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Textile Center's wide array of programming celebrates global textile traditions and brings together the world's leading artists, teachers, and innovators who inspire creativity for all who share a passion for fiber art. Our fellowships and residencies advance the careers for fiber artists at all levels of expertise, and the engagement of these artists contribute significantly to the vibrancy of our center and field.

Despite setbacks caused by a once-in-a-century pandemic, Textile Center is now breaking records for participation, thanks to programs delivered at our arts center in the Twin Cities' Towerside Innovation District, as well as at outreach locations throughout the Twin Cities and the region. Textile Center's impact is now international thanks to first-rate digital programming and ambassador travelers.



Textile Center Shop

Plans are underway to upgrade Textile Center's facility so that it becomes an exciting urban destination for fiber art that attracts people from around the nation to join us for workshops by renowned guest teaching artists or to participate in our community as artists in residence.

Textile Center's exhibitions are nationally recognized, deepening the public's understanding of fiber art in a culturally diverse context. Textile Center's retail program delights appreciators while increasing the income provided to artists and makers through its onsite and online sales, and Textile Center's impressive library serves scholars, artists, and enthusiasts around the world.

All of this is accomplished by focusing on our financial health, which enables us to sustain, nurture, and grow the organization to serve future generations.



 **Textile Center**
A national center for fiber art

textilecentermn.org