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An Academic Report on New Orleans Airlift: An Internship

Academic Report

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An Academic Report on New Orleans Airlift

An Internship Academic Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Arts Administration

By

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Abstract** .......................................................................................................................... iv

**Introduction** ...................................................................................................................... 1

**Section I: Profile of New Orleans Airlift** ........................................................................ 2

- Mission and Objective ........................................................................................................... 2
- History .................................................................................................................................. 3
- Legal Status ........................................................................................................................ 5
- Management Structure ......................................................................................................... 5
- Staff ..................................................................................................................................... 5
- Advisory Board .................................................................................................................... 7
- Budget Information .............................................................................................................. 7
- Programs ............................................................................................................................... 8
- Marketing ............................................................................................................................... 10

**Section II: Description of Internship** ............................................................................. 12

- Development ...................................................................................................................... 12
- Community Outreach ......................................................................................................... 13
- Social Media/Website Upkeep ............................................................................................ 14
- Research ............................................................................................................................. 15
- Special Events .................................................................................................................... 15
Section III: S.W.O.T Analysis

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

Section IV: Best Practices

Overview of coLAB Arts

Donor Giving

Versatility

Solid Financial Staff

Section V: Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Recommendation 2

Recommendation 3

Recommendation 4

Section VI: Conclusion

Vita

Works Cited
Appendices

Appendix 1.1 .................................................................................................................. 40
Appendix 1.2 .................................................................................................................. 41
Appendix 1.3 .................................................................................................................. 42
Appendix 1.4 .................................................................................................................. 46
Appendix 3.1 .................................................................................................................. 51
Appendix 5.1 .................................................................................................................. 69
ABSTRACT

This academic report was composed at the conclusion of a 480-hour internship with New Orleans Airlift. This report includes Airlift’s mission, history, and organizational structure, a SWOT analysis, duties and projects completed and a summary of best practices. Listed are also a series of suggestions and recommendations as to how New Orleans Airlift can improve and strengthen current practices to maximize its potential as a small arts organization.
INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide an organizational outline and academic assessment of New Orleans Airlift. The 480-hour internship was served from January of 2015 to October 2015. This report will also serve as a guide for New Orleans Airlift as it transitions from a National Performance Network partner to a self-sufficient 501(c) (3) status holder (while seeking financial stability for seasonal programming). The author intends to address how small arts organizations can find financial backing in the ruthless world of New Orleans philanthropic funding. The author also aims to explore how and why Airlift has continued to be a successful and relevant small arts organization. Art is the thread that unites the community of New Orleans into a unified yet diverse and vibrant fabric. Small arts organizations like Airlift continue to impact and unite their audiences and communities, creating a necessary space for themselves within the cultural economy of our city.

"The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity.

What is there that can transcend deep difference and stubborn divisions? The arts. They have a wonderful universality. Art has the potential to unify. It can speak in many languages without a translator.

The arts do not discriminate. The arts can lift us up."

–Former Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan
SECTION I: NEW ORLEANS Airlift

Mission and Objective

The current mission statement for New Orleans Airlift is:

“Collaborating to inspire wonder, connect communities and foster opportunities through arts education and the creation of experimental public artworks.”

Founded in 2008, New Orleans Airlift is dedicated to producing innovative projects for New Orleans-based artists to collaborate and engage with diverse communities locally and internationally. Airlift projects are identified by collaboration, experimentation and a belief in the artist’s role in creating a just, equitable and joyous future.

One of New Orleans Airlift’s most acclaimed and successful projects are The Music Box, a multi-disciplinary project dedicated to bringing the exploration and performance of musical architecture to the public. The Music Box first took place in the Bywater neighborhood of the upper 9th Ward in 2011. The installation was later followed by a new movable incarnation, The Music Box Roving Village Residencies. The Roving Village appeared in City Park in April of 2015 and plans to move throughout the city on a yearly basis.

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History

Airlift was founded in 2008 by Delaney Martin, a multi-media installation artist, and Jay Pennington, a musician and artist manager. Pennington and Martin began to collaborate just after Hurricane Katrina. Both witnessed the particular devastation of the Storm on the New Orleans artistic community, Pennington and Martin saw a shared, collaborative creativity as a way of coming together and mending this community.

While looking within, they also looked beyond New Orleans. Pennington and Martin also recognized the need for new audiences who could support local artists as they rebuilt their city. Together they organized an event called The New Orleans Airlift, which brought New Orleans artists to Berlin Germany in 2009. Pennington and Martin named this project, thought to be a one-time-event, after the Berlin Airlift of WWII. Soon after returning from Berlin, though, Pennington and Martin decided to continue the cultivation of unique artistic collaborations, and kept the organization’s name New Orleans Airlift.

In 2011, Martin, inspired by the sounds of old New Orleans homes, questioned how a house could be a musical instrument. Coined, “musical architecture”, Airlift envisioned two pillars of New Orleans culture- music and architecture- coming together into one sculptural piece. This was the conception of the musical house. Internationally acclaimed street artist Swoon was tasked with designing the look of the house. A small cardboard model of the house soon turned into a 10ft scale model. Inspired by Swoon’s ten-foot model, Martin created The Music Box: A Shantytown Sound Laboratory, which took place in the Bywater neighborhood
from 2011-2012. Alongside Swoon, and local artists, Martin created a village of small shacks and shanties that acted as laboratories for artists to collaborate and create musical inventions.

To this day, New Orleans Airlift programming highlights New Orleans’ underground art and experimental artists. Through networks, friendships and a close connection to Swoon, Airlift is able to cultivate and foster long-standing relationships with artists locally and globally. The organization understands how important a dynamic street culture, living culture and a thriving contemporary arts scene are to the neighborhoods within New Orleans. From the 2011 Music Box events held in the Bywater, to the most recently held events in City Park, Airlift is a growing experimental, artistic force within New Orleans.

In 2012, New Orleans Airlift took the Music Box out of the United States for an “Outpost” experience. The United States Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine invited New Orleans Airlift to create a Music Box styled piece for the Art Arsenal Museum. This was the first and only “Outpost” located outside of the United States, but spawned the idea of the Roving Village. By transporting that which is unique to New Orleans across the globe, Airlift is able to bring recognition to New Orleans as well as provide inspiration and creative collaboration internationally.

Since 2011, Airlift has been operating as a partner of the National Performance Network (NPN). Through NPN, Airlift is able to apply for most grants with NPN’s EIN and Tax number. Airlift is transitioning into a 501(c) (3), a designation from the federal government that allows tax-free operations by virtue of its culturally enriching programing. Unfortunately, many
grantors require the organization to hold its own 501(c) (3) status, rendering Airlift unable to apply for wide ranging funding opportunities.

The organization does not have a permanent location, and performs its administrational duties out of Program Director Tori Bush’s home. In 2016, Airlift hopes to secure sufficient funding to relocate to an office building that will also serve as a warehouse and construction site.

Legal Status

In July 2015, New Orleans Airlift filed all necessary paperwork with the IRS requesting 501(c)(3) status. Typically, IRS 501(c)(3) approval takes between 2 and 12 months. Airlift continues to operate as a partner of the National Performance Network.

Management Structure

New Orleans Airlift has five full time staff members and a small advisory board. The organization contracts artists for projects and for large “builds”. Airlift also seeks the help of volunteers on an as needed basis. Since the organization runs with few staff members, Tori Bush and Delaney Martin lead the administrative work of the organization: grants, legal matters, donor cultivation, as well as other departmental duties.

Staff²

Delaney Martin - Co-Founder of New Orleans Airlift / Artistic Director In 2008, she and Pennington founded New Orleans Airlift out of a desire to rebuild the artistic community in post-Katrina New Orleans. Martin also continues to pursue a wide range of large-scale projects

² See Appendix 1.1
unaffiliated with Airlift. An interesting and notable collaborative project, which she founded in 2010, is The New Orleans Society for Tableau Vivant. This society, “practices the forgotten art of “living pictures” for the betterment of the viewing public. The Society is comprised of New Orleans artists, performers and interested citizens who are dedicated to the revival of this out-of-style theatrical trope.” Martin continues to created new collaborative editions of The Music Box while adding other projects to Airlift’s canon and working independently as an artist.

Jay Pennington - Co-Founder of New Orleans Airlift / External Affairs Director- Well-known by his alter ego, DJ Rusty Lazer, Pennington promotes Airlift, creates high-quality videography, and lends his musical talents to events bringing musicians and artists together to create the unique and inspiring collaborations hallmarked by Airlift. Pennington has worked as manager of well-known bounce artists like Big Freedia and Nicky Da B. His connections within the music world have brought musicians such as Wilco and Animal Collective together with local New Orleans musicians for performances. Pennington continues to DJ locally, primarily within the Bywater and Marigny neighborhoods.

Tori Bush - Programs Director- Bush is an arts administrator and freelance writer. She joined Airlift staff in January 2012. Bush’s responsibilities include program planning, grant writing, community outreach, budgeting, and program implementation specifically for education and artists programs, production, effectiveness measurement and financial oversight.

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Taylor Lee Shepherd - Technical Director - Shepherd is the lead sound artist for New Orleans Airlift and has been involved since the early planning stages of the first Music Box. Shepherd aids in planning and fabrication and has created multiple installations for Airlift projects.

Christian Repaal - Shop Manager / Lead Fabricator - Repaal is an art fabricator, building contractor and part-time art teacher. Most recently he has worked closely with international street artist Swoon to help her realize some of her more complex three dimensional pieces for *The Music Box Roving Village: City Park*.

**Advisory Board**

The Advisory Board was assembled based on each individual's skills, interest, and personal connections. There are six board members: An artist, a CEO of a crafts guild, two architects, a lawyer, and a start-up entrepreneur. The board meets tri-monthly, although no strict date is set. The board is frequently in contact over email regarding various projects; their expertise is called upon for business ventures, collaborations, and donor solicitations.

**Budget and Funding Information**

New Orleans Airlift operates on a very tight budget that is funded primarily through grants and donations. During the 2014 fiscal year, New Orleans Airlift was granted $225,000 from The Education Foundation of America. This money allowed for the organization to begin planning for the first installment of the *Roving Village Residencies* in City Park. There were also

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4 See Appendix 1.2
other grants that Airlift received totaling over $4,500 and individual donor giving, which equaled approximately $2,500.\(^5\)

The Education Foundation of America grant received in 2014 was a one-time donation and was quickly spent on general operations and planning. Originally, The Roving Village was planned to be a semi-annual program, appearing throughout the city in the spring and fall. However, after an expensive first run in City Park costing close to $100,000, New Orleans Airlift has announced that The Roving Village will be on hiatus until spring 2016. Airlift plans to launch a crowdfunding event to help sustain the organization’s small projects and staff during this time.

Airlift is currently allocating funds for future programs and projects through grants and individual requests. Airlift is scrambling to allocate funds for future programming and for their overhead costs. As of June 2015, Airlift has placed all full time employees on part time salaries until more funding is secured.

**Programs**

New Orleans Airlift is able to fulfill its mission through unique and collaborative programming. From 2011 through 2012 the first ever installation of The Music Box “A Shantytown Sound Laboratory” presented innovative musical performances and hosted free public hours in its maiden location, the historic Bywater neighborhood. Constructed from the remains of a blighted house, invented instruments were embedded into the walls, ceilings and floors of structures created by twenty-five collaborating artists\(^6\). News of The Music Box reached

\(^5\) See Appendix 1.3
\(^6\) See Appendix 1.4
media outlets far and wide. National Public Radio, BBC World News and the New York Times, as well as local sources such as the music blog, My Spilt Milk and The Times-Picayune all covered the project.

New Orleans Airlift works to combine artists with influential institutions, individuals and community members. The hope is to create collaborative productions that are both participatory and high quality. During Prospect 3, a New Orleans contemporary art biennial, Airlift joined forces with local art nonprofit Creative Alliance of New Orleans (CANO) to create Space Rites. This interactive art installation and musical performance series was held in the deconsecrated St. Maurice Church, located in the lower 9th ward. Airlift’s Technical Director, Taylor Lee Shepherd, created an interactive sound installation titled Altarpiece, which was made from rewired televisions and installed upon the altar. Acting as invented oscilloscopes, the televisions reflected sounds into random patterns of light. Space Rites was a series of six musical events ranging from orchestral concerts to punk rock shows. Each musical performance created a unique viewing experience on the alter. “Number 8 in "Top 10 Art Experiences of 2014" sound sculptor Taylor Shepherd breathed new life into 30 old-fashioned televisions, when he converted them into sound-sensitive oscilloscopes mounted in the two-story baroque altar of a ghostly deconsecrated church. The concerts that followed were sublime.”

A majority of the author’s internship was spent helping prepare and launch the newest installment of The Music Box, The Music Box Roving Village Residencies. As the name states,

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the houses travel to different parts to the city, appear and then leave without a trace. The first installation took place in City Park from April to May 2015 and will take up new residence in Central City in spring 2016. In 2015, Over 10,000 audience members explored the installation through nighttime orchestral concerts, free public hours on weekends, and educational workshops/artist talks. Over 700 children participated in *The Music Box Roving Village: City Park* through school field trips and after-school partnerships. Airlift targeted schools in close vicinity of the *Music Box*, which are predominantly African American. The organization also reached out to home school groups who often frequent City Park for science and history lessons. Village lesson plans were created with the help of Suzanna Ritz, a local arts educator and art administrator. The Village concert series hosted musicians from varying musical backgrounds and locations; well-known acts like Solange Knowles and Arto Lindsay to local bands such as Lost Bayou Ramblers and Preservation Hall Jazz Band.

Starting in October 2015, New Orleans Airlift will begin to work with Ashe Cultural Center to create an African themed marketplace. Students who attend Ashe’s afterschool program will help build the market and create items to sell. The market will be open during Arts Council New Orleans’ 2015 LUNA (Light Up NOLA Arts) Fête event.

**Marketing**

New Orleans Airlift views all races, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds as its target audience, but puts heavy marketing emphasis on the underserved communities of New Orleans. Marketing is conducted through the following outlets:

- Social Media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, etc.)
• Flyers for events placed throughout New Orleans coffee shops, cafes, and schools
• WWOZ radio artist interviews and running advertisements
• E-Mail Blasts
• Newspaper articles, and other publications (NPR, New York Times, Huffington Post, Spilt Milk, BBC World Service, NOLA.com, The Times-Picayune, and many others.)

As the above list indicates, marketing efforts are very low budget. All graphics are created in-house or by volunteers. The Airlift website is a paid site and has a modern, easy to use template.
SECTION II: DESCRIPTION OF INTERNSHIP

The internship with New Orleans Airlift was conducted over the period of 480 hours, between January 2015 and October 2015. Given the organization's limited staff, the internship was planned such that the author would handle ad-hoc work assignments in those areas the organization’s Programs Director, Tori Bush, requested. As the organization is without a centralized office space, most work (save The Music Box installation period and open hours in City Park) was conducted at Bush’s residence in the Bywater neighborhood. Internship duties included tasks in development, community outreach, social media, research, and special events.

Development

As in most arts organizations, development is an integral part of Airlift’s business structure. As the organization continues to perform on a small budget, there is a constant need for the acquisition of funds to continue programing. The author focused efforts on finding new funding sources, applying for grants and soliciting donations from community partners.

The author was responsible for aiding and completing grant applications for the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, Joan Mitchell Foundation, Arts Council New Orleans, Greater New Orleans Foundation, and others. These funds were requested in order to continue The Music Box Roving Village Residencies, which plans to move to the Central City neighborhood in spring 2016. Altogether, Airlift requested over $50,000 in grants during the summer of 2015. These included grants from Joan Mitchell Foundation, New Orleans Jazz &
Heritage Foundation, Arts Council New Orleans, Greater New Orleans Foundation, as well as several smaller grants. None of these grants were sustainability grants, but rather requested funds for upcoming events such as the relaunch of *Music Box Roving Village Residencies*, as well as funds for the African arts market. As the status of the grant awards remains unknown, Airlift’s budget and 2016 programming is held in limbo.

The author also spent time researching grants in The Foundation Center database at the New Orleans Public Library. The database includes detailed profiles of all active U.S. foundations, as well as an extensive file of recent grants awarded by the nation's top funders.

**Community Outreach**

As Airlift began the groundwork for *The Music Box Roving Village: City Park*, the author was given the task of reaching out to local alcohol companies and distributors. A letter was drafted and sent to many local and national wine and spirit companies, which requested a donation of beverages to serve close to 2,000 audience members. Airlift was able to acquire several cases of donated beer from Bayou Teche Brewing for the opening event.

The author also spent time walking to houses near the City Park site to inform the neighborhood of the Music Box close by. As she passed out fliers and answered questions her street outreach brought many new audience members to the Village who were excited to have such a fascinating art space in an abandoned section near their homes.
Social Media/Website Upkeep

When the author began working at New Orleans Airlift, the Facebook site was a “Friends” page, and not a “Like” and/or “Fan” page, and she encouraged the organization to make a change. The benefits of transitioning from the Friend page to the Like page are numerous. For instance, with a Friend page, there is no way of tracking effectiveness. Due to the switch, Airlift was able to gather information regarding the interactions and reach each post on the page timeline. Page Insights breakdown fans by gender, age, and location, making it easier to target certain audiences. Also, Airlift was able to leverage a new platform for advertising and promotion by paying to “boost” events and links to ticket sales. The page has generated over 1,500 new likes since the change in March, a near 200% increase from the previous page.

The author created a social media spreadsheet that was used to create daily content for all social media outlets. This spreadsheet was used primarily during The Music Box Roving Village: City Park to promote the event and show online fans the progress of the installation. The author also posted on behalf of New Orleans Airlift the organization’s Instagram, Tumblr and Twitter.

The author was also tasked with updating the organization's website. The author added photographs, bios and website links for each artist who works with Airlift. The names and links are now listed alphabetically on the collaborators page so that visitors to the site can readily find their favorite musician and/or artist collaborator. Short summaries of programs and events were written and added to the website by the author as well.
Research

As stated above, the author researched grants in The Foundation Center database at the New Orleans Public Library. From this research, the author created a spreadsheet to organize grants by due dates, amount, and local or national giving. The author also collected several 990 tax forms in order to gather more contact information and understanding of the giving nature of the organizations.

The author also conducted research at the Historic New Orleans Collection’s William Research Center. New Orleans Airlift plans to partner with the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra and cellist Yotam Haber for a project celebrating life on the Mississippi River. This particular project will include floating structures based on Mississippi flatboats. The author collected original woodblock prints and samples of literature to empower Airlift to create historically accurate structures for this project.

Special Events

From April 3rd to May 10th, 2015 the author spent all internship hours on site at The Music Box Roving Village: City Park. Hotspot Internet allowed for the creation of an outdoor office space that allowed the author to welcome visitors and school field trips to the Village. On April 3rd and 4th, The Music Box opened to the public with its first musical performances. The author facilitated set-up for these events days before, overseeing musical rehearsals, finishing adjustments to the musical houses as well as decorating the site. On the nights of the opening events, April 3rd and 4th the author managed ticket sales as well as purchased refreshments for the entertainers. On the nights of the closing concerts, May 9th and 10th, the author maintained the
same event day duties. Additionally, the author posted photos to Instagram while live-tweeting the events. In total, the Village welcomed 10,000 visitors as well as 700 local school children over its six-week engagement.
SECTION III: S.W.O.T ANALYSIS

The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to help develop a strong business strategy. The technique is used in understanding strengths and weaknesses, and for identifying both the opportunities and threats facing an organization.

- **Strengths**: outstanding positive characteristics of the organization
- **Weaknesses**: characteristics that place the organization at a disadvantage
- **Opportunities**: elements externally that the organization can harness
- **Threats**: elements externally that could cause trouble for the organization

**SWOT Analysis for New Orleans Airlift**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and experience in the</td>
<td>No established 501(c)(3) status</td>
<td>Potential to become the only established organization for</td>
<td>Limited number of grant opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>field</td>
<td>Lack of financial stability and sustainability</td>
<td>interactive public Art within New Orleans</td>
<td>Increased competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion and energy</td>
<td>Lack of centralized office space</td>
<td>New Orleans is an Art destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Website</td>
<td>Lack of financial staffing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Success of the Music Box</td>
<td>Lack of effective Executive Director</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Strengths

Knowledge and Experience in the Field

The staff of New Orleans Airlift brings years of experience to the organization from working in the creative arts world. In particular, Pennington and Martin have years of experience in the New Orleans art community. Martin has been showing art publically since her first solo show in 2002, and continues to lend her expertise to small arts projects unaffiliated with Airlift. Pennington has been a bounce artist manager, DJ, and musician for over 29 years. His knowledge of the industry, as well as his personal connections, has brought meaningful collaboration between local musicians and artists, and New Orleans Airlift.

Passion and Energy

The entirety of Airlift’s staff of five is committed to providing public art, enriching communities, and supporting local artists and their craft. Even with the lack of funding to provide full time salaries, the staff continues to spend long hours writing grants, contacting potential donors, and promoting the organization. New Orleans Airlift counts on the freely given passion and energy of its staff.

Strong Website

New Orleans Airlift has a visually appealing and user-friendly website. A contracted website designer created the site through the hosting platform, Joomla!. The site contains information on staff members, past projects, an online store, and a link to contact information.
Staff members and the author update the site regularly. If programming issues arise, the original Webmaster is contacted, and he aids in resolving the problem.

**The Success of The Music Box, and Music Box Roving Village Residencies**

Since 2011, Airlift has been known for imaginative work, which led to the creation of the original Music Box. The first installation, as well as the reincarnated *Music Box Roving Village Residencies*, reached over 10,000 individuals and 700 school children. Both projects offered an innovative, magical and unique experience to visitors, with public recognition across social class and race. Through local and national news coverage as well as promotion by celebrity guests, *The Music Box* had considerably raised Airlift’s profile. These positive write-ups and continued successful programming may help with securing future grant funding as well as legitimizing the organization for potential funders.

As reviewed by Doug MacCash on *NOLA.com*, “The overall affect was weird, spooky, a touch existential, and often wonderful.”

Nels Cline of Wilco, who performed during a secret pop-up show stated, “[its] a wonderful, wonderful thing, for everybody to feel that they can participate in the making of sound in this kind of collective way, or in some way where they just want to explore sound. I feel like exploring sound is what made me who I am, and changed my life, and so [the village] could change somebody else's life.”

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**Weaknesses**

*No Established 501(c)(3) Status*

Although Airlift applied for 501(c)(3) status in July 2015 it has not yet been approved. Many funding sources require this status to be eligible for grant money; at this time the organization is not eligible for any grant that requires this status. The lack of 501(c)(3) status hurts Airlift’s potential programming. The lack of a nonprofit IRS status also damages the reputation of the organization. These issues plan to be resolved once the federal government approves application paperwork.

*Lack of Financial Stability and Sustainability*

Financial stability stands as the largest problem facing the organization. Even with the continued success of The Music Box, many grantors ask, why should I fund this project again? Airlift has to reinvent the project each time, targeting different demographics and fabricating new houses and new sounds. New work requires funding for artistic and administrative staff as well as materials and rental spaces. Airlift must allocate funds either from new donors and grantors who either find the music box fresh and exciting, or from past donors that deem the project worth funding again. In 2015, *The Helis Foundation largely funded The Music Box Roving Village: City Park*. Helis has a notorious reputation in New Orleans as it plans to begin fracking in St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana. After the six weeks in City Park, Airlift heard many complaints from the community about future plans to work with Helis, and since then has decided to separate itself from any future collaboration with the organization.
**Lack of Centralized Office Space**

Airlift’s current office space is Program Manager Bush’s home in the Bywater. While the administrative team negotiates for a permanent office space with a realtor, Airlift must hold meetings in coffee shops, homes of board members or other business locations throughout the city. Working out of a house does not lend the flexibility nor the capacity to continue planning, creating, and networking for large-scale art installations. Houses like those used in *The Music Box* require secure shelter and a shop for fabrication. Currently, Airlift rents warehouse space to take care of these needs, which is another large cost to a small budget.

**Lack of Financial Staff**

Currently Airlift lacks financial staff; Bush, the Programs Manager, prepares a majority of the finances. Hiring a finance manager should be a priority for the organization. A dedicated finance staff member would free Bush’s time to manage and plan programs, write grants, and focus more on administrative duties.

**Lack of Effective Executive Director**

In 2014, New Orleans Airlift hired an outside source to create a three-year strategic plan.\(^{10}\) Although some of this plan has been put into place, several key areas are still lacking. The plan suggested that Airlift hire an executive director in 2015, this did not happen. The job description within the strategic plan suggests that the executive director would be the face of the organization. He or she would approve changes to the website as well as the approve the yearly budget. The executive director would also be in charge of financial development and donor

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\(^{10}\) See Appendix 3.1
cultivation. Airlift has placed this on the backburner, and decided to continue to overload Martin and Bush with these duties as well as their own. Although Martin currently acts as executive director, hiring another staff member to fulfill this position would enable her to be more creative and plan more meaningful programs. Hiring an Executive Director would also create more revenue for the organization through donor cultivation and individual giving.

**Opportunities**

*Potential to Become the Only Established Organization for Interactive Public Art within New Orleans*

Airlift’s projects have proven to be successful: sold out ticket sales, revenue close to $70,000 from the City Park events, and hosting over 10,000 visitors over one month. People of all ages, races, and socioeconomic backgrounds are invited to participate in Airlift’s projects. These programs foster positive interactions and promote creativity. Airlift takes the democratization of art in New Orleans seriously by encouraging people from all socioeconomic classes and communities to participate.

*New Orleans is an Art Destination*

New Orleans is known as one of the most culturally rich cities in the United States. People are drawn to the funky art scene and the flamboyant nature of the city. New Orleans Airlift is well suited within this community, attracting many visitors and experimental art enthusiasts with its unique programming and events. New Orleans Airlift positions itself within
the mix of tradition and contemporary, allowing for a broad range of programming that is easily accessible to many types of audiences.

**Threats**

*Limited Number of Grant Opportunities*

Grant opportunities for arts organizations are limited, especially given the economic environment for the arts locally and nationally. Many grantors have scaled back funding due to budget cuts or no longer accept solicitation from the public for funding, preferring to privately select organizations to fund. Airlift must vie for the remaining grants among many equally deserving organizations.

*Increased Competition*

The *New York Times* reported that the number of nonprofits has increased 60% in the last decade. New Orleans alone saw a huge spike in number of nonprofits after Hurricane Katrina. This competition for funds and resources, both locally and nationally, weighs heavily on small organizations like Airlift.

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SECTION IV: BEST PRACTICES

New Orleans Airlift is an organization at the forefront of experimental art in the New Orleans area. With a mission to collaborate, inspire, connect communities and foster opportunities through the creation of experimental public art, artists and community members are brought together to share skills, knowledge and potential ideas. Airlift is also hallmarked by its reputation to pay its collaborating artists fair working wages. Many artists who work with Airlift are able to supporting themselves while pursuing an other artistic endeavors. Airlift partners with community organizations in order to better understand and serve different neighborhoods throughout the city. These organizations have included Ashe Cultural Arts Center, Make Music NOLA, Tulane City Center, All Souls Church, as well as many others. Most recently, Airlift has partnered with Ashe Cultural Arts Center to create an African Arts market, which will be opening to the public during LUNA Fête 2015. This arts market will not only serve as a cultural homage to African arts markets, but children who attend Ashe’s after school programing will help build the stalls, sell their own art, and gain a hands on experience in commerce. No other organization within New Orleans crosses racial and class borders with the mission of uniting communities in this way.

Although New Orleans Airlift is unique to Southern Louisiana, there are other arts organizations that serve communities in a similar fashion, such as coLAB Arts in New Brunswick, New Jersey. It is important to compare Airlift’s practices against a similar organization in order to spotlight areas where more effort is needed as well as propose possible methods for success.
Overview of coLAB Arts

As stated, coLAB Arts is a similar organization to New Orleans Airlift. “coLAB Arts engages artists, social advocates, and communities to create transformative new work. coLAB Arts facilitates creative conversation through innovative programs and artist infrastructure, connects artists with community partners and mentors, and executes productions that challenge perceptions and inspire action.” In practice, coLAB Arts runs a number of programs that facilitate experimental, innovative art, both performative and visually, within New Brunswick, New Jersey.

coLAB Arts believes that collaboration is an active and creative process. The organization draws energy and inspiration from working with emerging artists and finding new platforms and audiences for established creative voices. coLAB Arts works to facilitate artistic conversation that leads to inspiration and new creative ideas. The organization connects creative people of all backgrounds and mediums, with individuals and organizations that work directly with communities in all areas of civic life. coLAB Arts creates programs and events that are reflective of those conversations and relationships and challenge perceptions and inspire action.

coLAB Arts is a model of multiple best practices:

**Donor Giving**

As stated in the S.W.O.T analysis, New Orleans Airlift needs to become more financially stable. Funding and financial health are key to an organization's overall success. As a result, the following analysis will look at the best financial practices of coLAB Arts in order to determine what is best for Airlift’s continued success.

First, coLAB Arts requires a contribution from its board members. The board of directors currently has nine members, and there is an advisory board of six. In 2014 coLAB Arts declared a total of $8,945 defined as “Board Contributions” on their IRS 990 tax form. Board members are responsible for providing a sound financial basis for the organization. By committing to a financial contribution, a board member recognizes his or her responsibility to the organization.

Individual contribution is an essential part of securing adequate resources for all small organizations. Listed on the homepage of coLAB Arts’ website, a request for donations link sends the viewer to multiple options for giving. Along with the ability to contribute a self-determined amount, coLAB offers supporter levels. These levels range from $100 to $10,000, as defined on the website\(^{14}\). The levels list what benefits the donor receives from his or her donation.\(^{15}\) This offers transparency and understanding of how the donation will impact the organization. The levels are also influential in helping a donor decide a gift amount, especially if there is public recognition with a higher donation.

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\(^{15}\) See Appendix 5.1
“People give more money when they get more choices. The largest charities [bringing in the most donations] have dozens of giving clubs at different dollar levels or for different causes.”

This example from, Successful Fundraising: A Complete Handbook for Volunteers and Professionals reflects on the idea that people want choice, and if that choice is a higher donation amount, the donor is more likely to go for it.

Versatility

Each month coLAB Arts’ curators develop a theme that will span each program within the organization. coLAB Arts’ arts programming works to holistically engage and discuss current social issues, and strengthen its presence and impact in the local New Brunswick community. These monthly themes and events prove that coLAB Arts is adaptable, and fresh. Working closely with the New Brunswick public school system, the organization also works to bring students together through theater, writing, and visual arts. The organization seeks to bring art to a common level, where it can be enjoyed and practiced by all. One such program is the HearME Verbatim Theater project. Through this program, coLAB Arts provides underserved students from the local community the opportunity to take part in an otherwise out of reach transformative and creative educational experience.

A constant challenge for arts nonprofits is outreach to a public that does not define itself as ‘artistic’ and so does not participate in arts programming. “People who are disinclined have

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little interest in the arts. They likely keep their distance from arts organizations because of perceptual barriers. For example, they might believe an art form has nothing to offer or think that they’d feel out of place… Since their mindset differs from that of current patrons, [though] attracting them would diversify and change the composition of an organization’s audience.”

A wide net allows for diversification in the psychographic profile of the audience, but also opens up the organization to potential artists, donors, and investors who otherwise might not have been involved.

**Solid Financial Staff**

“[A] Public/Private Ventures study… provides some direct evidence of the link between organizational capacity and program quality. The study found that the highest-quality programs spent proportionally more on staffing than did lower-quality programs; notably, the difference was not the result of higher average staff salaries, but rather of more paid staff hours spent on non–direct service activities.”

A strong financial staff is a best practice within most nonprofit organizations. Financial managers are able to better assess and forecast cash flow needs, reduce administrative and financial burdens, and invest in financial management capacity building. In the current economic climate, the longevity of many nonprofits is threatened by deep budget cuts. Under such conditions, it is more urgent than ever for organizations to adopt effective and strategic financial

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management practices. coLAB Arts’ understands strategic financial management as “financial strategies, which are goals, patterns or alternatives designed to improve and optimize financial management in order to achieve corporate results where financial strategy represents a path to achieve and maintain business competitiveness and position a company as a world-class organization.”

SECTION V: RECOMMENDATIONS

The most critical issues facing New Orleans Airlift currently are lack of funds, lack of staff, and lack of permanent office space. The following recommendations detail solutions to these issues as to ensure organizational security.

Recommendation 1: Board Members and Giving Requirements

As New Orleans Airlift begins to transition into a 501(c)(3) organization, a new board must be created. Currently, everyone from the advisory board has been asked to join the new board. Airlift will then select two new members from the community to join. This selection will be based on the need to diversify the board, add varied skill sets and honor those who have shown a previous commitment to Airlift. The recruitment of these two members must be undertaken with care in order to bring on individuals who will give generously of their time and skills Airlift would benefit greatly from candidates who possess one or more of the following:

- Financial/Accounting skills
- Law degree
- Real estate network
- Disposable income/philanthropic history
- Strong network of friends/partners who enjoy giving to arts organizations

Recruiting members of the New Orleans community who have these qualities will provide skills and support to the newly incorporated organization and will bolster its ability to execute present operations and plan strategically for the future.
Once the new board is in place, bylaws must be created. This document collaboratively developed with Airlift staff and the board members will serve as the governing principles under which decisions regarding the organization will be made.

The author also recommends asking for board member dues. Dues can be written off as a tax-deductible donation, which will in turn help the organization continue its mission. This amount could be set by Airlift staff or be left up to the generosity of the board. If a board member is unable to pay out of pocket, then he or she would be required to solicit donations from his or her personal network. If a board member is averse to paying dues, the level of commitment to Airlift’s mission should be taken into consideration. Airlift should also require board members to sign a document that lists expectations – from amount and frequency of dues to board involvement in organizational activities.

Regular board engagement and recruitment is necessary to ensure that the mission of New Orleans Airlift is being upheld. An active, informed and engaged board will be the greatest steward of and advocate for Airlift’s mission. In order to keep the board engaged and active, Airlift must present regular updates on finances and operational information, as well as new ideas for projects and networking.
Recommendation 2: Levels of Support Listed on Website

Research has shown that suggesting gift amounts lead to improved donation performance by increased average online gift size\textsuperscript{20}. As stated previously, levels offer transparency to a donor, showing exactly what his or her money will “buy.” The levels recommended by the author range from $100-$1,000 and include what that contribution will signify for the organization’s program and financial well-being:

- **Collaborator Level $100+-** This level of contribution goes towards many individuals’ hard work and dedication to the mission of New Orleans Airlift. Pledging to give $100+ shows your support and dedication to bringing experimental music and art to the public.

- **Creative Connection Level $200+-** A Creative Connection Level supporter sparks new collaborations, conversations, and ideas. A donation of $200 or more can help bring a new artist into town, fund the beginning of a new musical house, or purchase a new instrument for the Village. Think of all the possibilities that can spawn from this donation!

- **Innovator’s Circle $500+-** The Innovator's Circle shows your support and dedication to the mission of New Orleans Airlift. Through your donation of $500 or more, Airlift is able to hire another artist, while continuing to pay fair working wages, allowing more creative minds to support themselves throughout New Orleans.

• Artists Circle $1,000+- Artists Circle supporters are the backbone of New Orleans Airlift. This donation of $1,000 or more completes projects, keeps doors open, funds lower income schools’ field trips to the Roving Village, and supports the continued efforts of New Orleans Airlift to bring high-quality experimental art to the public.

**Recommendation 3: Hire or Outsource Financial Staff**

Airlift will need to raise funds in order to enrich staff capacity or hire a staff member who is willing to raise the money for his or her own salary. Another option would be to outsource a finance team. By outsourcing, Airlift would have access to all of the benefits of a full finance department, through part time professionals, at a fraction of the cost of employing a full time staff member.

The operational functions of the finance member, such as paying bills, processing payroll and producing reports for funders, are essential for keeping the organization going on a day-to-day basis. The strategic functions include long-term planning; forecasting and analyses of the organization’s operating, investing and financing needs; and oversight of the organization’s key business activities.
Recommendation 4: Follow Strategic Plan Closer

Strategic planning is critical to a nonprofit’s success. A strategic plan involves vision, mission and outside-of-the-box thinking. This plan helps describe where the directions of an organization in a goal-oriented fashion. A hired professional has created the 2014-2017 strategic plan that Airlift uses. This particular plan helps envision goals and defines strategies to achieve objectives. For example, one of the goals suggests that Airlift “Continually Incorporate Organizational Self-Reflection”. By self-reflecting at different points during the year, Airlift will be able to identify more efficient ways to maximize resources to aid in the organization’s programs and serviced populations. Also, inviting staff to share their perspective about the organization builds a stronger team. Staff members who feel appreciated and trusted are often more committed to the organization. Consistently pushing to reach the potential of an organization, shows staff, volunteers, and your service population that the status quo is not acceptable. Therefore, this goal is a very important strategy set forth in the strategic plan. The author believes that Airlift will be able to maximize its potential and experience more revenue if it were to follow the professionally developed strategic plan more closely.

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21 See Appendix 3.1
SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

The internship at New Orleans Airlift was an exceptional learning experience, further contributing to the author’s knowledge and interest in public art and place making. She received hands-on experience and the chance to evaluate an organization, applying the practices and lessons taught in the Arts Administration Program at the University of New Orleans. This internship allowed the author to work alongside and connect with many creative and innovative people within New Orleans. Immensely beneficial from start to finish, the internship honed the author’s skills in grant writing, small business management and event planning. Working within an organization that pushes boundaries and exposes audiences to new creative experiences was a remarkable opportunity. The author was also able to better understand the realities of working with a small art nonprofit. She has a new appreciation for how crucial well-administered programming and strong organizational structure are to a small nonprofit’s longevity.

Airlift’s commitment to innovative collaborations and experimental art is unparalleled in the city. The author was invited to staff and board meetings, where her opinion was heard and questions were always answered. Her work was appreciated and never undervalued. On her first day at Airlift, Martin told the author the organization was much like a family, and by the end of the internship she truly felt a part of it.

The internship and thesis report provided the author with the chance to use the skills and knowledge learned during her time in the Arts Administration Program at The University of New
Orleans. The time in the Program and the eight-month internship with New Orleans Airlift has been deemed unforgettable; the author feels truly lucky to have had both experiences.
VITA

BRIDGET NOLAN

2253 Urquhart St • New Orleans, Louisiana 70117 • (504) 435-0173 • BrNolan0@Gmail.Com

EDUCATION

University of New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana
Master’s of Art Administration

Frostburg State University, Frostburg, Maryland
Bachelors of Fine Arts Focused in Photography

Honors: Volunteer Service Award presented by Governor O’Mally-2008
Affiliations: Kappa Pi- International Art Honors society, Alpha Sigma Tau- National Service Sorority.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Intern, New Orleans, Louisiana- January 2015- October 2015
Employer: New Orleans Airlift

Graduate Assistant, New Orleans, Louisiana- January 2014- December 2015
Employer: Ogden Museum of Southern Art

Creative Marketing Intern, Halethorpe, Maryland – September 2012- June 2013
Employer: Habitat for Humanity

Art Instructor, Seoul, South Korea – August 2011- August 2012
Employer: JNE English Academy

AWARDS

Gold Presidential Volunteer Service Award August 2011
Completed 3000+ hours of volunteer work spanning two AmeriCorps terms. The President’s Volunteer Service Award is the premier volunteer awards program, encouraging United States citizens through presidential recognition to live a life of service.

Volunteer Service Award August 2008
Maryland service award presented by Governor O’Mally after serving 10 months with AmeriCorps State/Habitat for Humanity in Baltimore, Maryland.
WORKS CITED


MacCash, Doug. "Bravo for the Weirdly Wonderful Music Box Roving Village in City Park."


APPENDIX

1.1- New Orleans Airlift Staff Contact list as of September 2015

**Delaney Martin**
Co-Founder of New Orleans Airlift / Artistic Director
delaney@neworleansairlift.org

**Jay Pennington**
Co-Founder of New Orleans Airlift External Affairs Director
jay@neworleansairlift.org

**Tori Bush**
Programs Director
tori@neworleansairlift.org

**Taylor Shepherd**
Technical Director
taylor@neworleansairlift.org

**Christian Repaal**
Shop Manager / Lead Fabricator
christian@neworleansairlift.org
1.2- New Orleans Airlift Advisory Board as of September 2015

**Ben Semel**  
Lawyer with Pryor Cashman’s Litigation Group in New York

**Elizabeth Shannon**  
New Orleans based Artist

**Michael Glenboski**  
Architect at Eskew+Dumez+Ripple

**Wayne Troyer**  
Design Director of Studio WTA

**Bryan Bailey**  
New Orleans Entrepreneur

**John Hankins**  
Founder and CEO of New Orleans Master Crafts Guild
1.3- Budget

**Airlift**

**Profit and Loss**

January - December 2014

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**Expenses**

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<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
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AN INVITATION!
MUSIC BOX ROVING VILLAGE: CENTRAL CITY

Would you like to build a musical house with us? Calling artists, inventors, sculptors, architects, musicians, tinkerers, and people whom aren’t any of these things but have great ideas and the will to make them.

BACKGROUND:
The Music Box is an evolving project that started in 2010 with the goal of building a musical house in New Orleans. The project, produced by New Orleans Airlift, an artist-led, multi-disciplinary arts organization, founded by Delaney Martin and Jay Pennington (AKA DJ Rusty Lazer). We focus on international collaborations and innovative projects as a way amplify the weirdest and most wonderful parts of New Orleans culture.

The Music Box was inspired by New Orleans musical, architectural and cultural legacies. It was a collaborative dream by the artists Swoon, Delaney Martin and Taylor Shepherd and was seen from the beginning as way spotlight the unsung community of inventors and avant-garde artists and musicians, alongside bearers of traditional culture, brass bands, and rappers that New Orleans is known for.
In 2011, Delaney conceived **The Music Box, A Shantytown Sound Laboratory** as a way to test our ideas. This elaborate experiment was built by 25 local, national and international collaborating artists and was as much for us as for our audience. What did we mean by musical architecture? It was important to publically test our idea.

It turned out that **The Music Box** was a huge hit. We welcomed over 15000 visitors during six months of weekend opening hours. Over 80 amazing musicians played it in orchestral concerts and drew critical acclaim in places like New York Times, NPR, Artnet, Smithsonian Magazine and many more.

**Moving Forward:**
Having outgrown the original installation space in the Bywater neighborhood, the next idea was to make a Music Box, which would appear magically throughout New Orleans. Airlift decided to start fabricating on moveable houses in 2014, and planned for the Music Box Roving Village to launch in 2015.

**Movable House Music:**
In the spring of 2015, the first installment of the Music Box Roving Village came to fruition in City Park. Over the course of six weeks we had over 10000 audience members explore the installation, during nighttime orchestral concerts, free public hours on weekends, educational workshops and artist talks. The Village also hosted musicians from all musical backgrounds, local and national.

Our in-house engineer will work with selected artists to help ensure the houses are built to withstand travel so that they can appear as quickly as they disappear. Plus - the houses we build now will become the inaugural houses of our one-day permanent site.

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**A CALL FOR IDEAS!**
What does musical architecture or the idea of a musical house mean to you?
You can think about your proposal as an idea for an entire structure from top to bottom, or you can propose several ideas for instrumentation that could work in lots of different structures.

If you are visual artist that doesn’t mean you cannot propose a sound-generating work! Maybe you have a great conceptual idea for a musical house, but don’t have the skills to create a mechanical or electronic sound element. Tell us about the idea. We may be able to pair you with a compatible sound artist, kinetic artist, or inventor.

**The question to ask is:** How can the amazing work you make be applied to the concept of Musical Architecture? And remember: This is a highly collaborative project! You should expect to possibly be paired with one or more people and to evolve your ideas.

**Artist Proposal Instructions**

Proposals are due by **DATE** and can be sent via email to info@neworleansairlift.org.

Please submit the following:

1. Describe your ideas for musical architecture and dream big. Submissions can include text, drawings, or samples of past work. If you are an inventor or sound artist convince us it will work! If you are a visual artist tell us why your design would be meaningful. If you are a musician tell us how your idea would really work from a musician’s perspective. Please be sure to indicate or give a sample of the kind of sound that your piece will make.

2. Budget. This should be as accurate as possible. Please tack on an extra 10% of your overall budget under miscellaneous.

That’s it. We don’t want to make this hard for you! But please consider the following in your proposals:

**Art Work Guidelines:**

If you are receiving this invitation we are already fans of your work. However when forming your proposal there are some things to keep in mind that we will be looking for:

A. Is your idea interactive for the user/visitor/performer?
B. How well are architecture and music/sound integrated in your idea?
C. Does your idea incorporate strong and visible gestures whether on the part of the performer activating the musical architecture or on the part of the structure itself? Think about how it will look during a performance.
D. Is your idea kinetic
E. Is the way one operates and interacts with your idea intuitive (good) or will it require a staff member to explain, demonstrate it (not so good).

F. Will you idea make people want to touch it because it is tactile, jump on it because it is fun, press it because it sounds crazy. Will it make people want to play and explore it?

G. Will you vision encourage a sense of wonder, exploration, and possibility?
   * SEE THE LAST PAGE OF THIS FORM: LESSONS FROM THE MUSIC BOX TO LEARN WHAT HAS WORKED BEST FOR US TO DATE!

**Budget Guidelines:** A good average for your project costs is $7,000. Projects that cost less than this are of course welcomed. Projects up to $15,000 will be considered as well. Please do not include an artist fee in your budget. Fees will be negotiated individually based on time commitments and other realities.

**House Size Guidelines:** A good average is 10’ x 10’ but can be bigger or smaller. Would be wonderful to see a house have transformer qualities so that it could have different arrangements.

**Materials Guidelines:** we build with salvage where possible because we think it is inspiring and good for the earth to see it imaginatively reused (in New Orleans we have tons of blighted houses), but if you need to use other materials, that is fine.

**Further Considerations:**
Some of the artists receiving this invitation have artistic practices that make perfect sense for this project. Others may have to stretch their practice to make it fit the demands of a musical architecture. Please consider this an invitation to experiment and play.

**Artist Referrals:**
If you know of an artist who you feel should be invited to propose a work for this project please send us their details. Because we like your work we trust your judgment!

**TIMELINE**
**DATES TBD**

**Questions:**
We are sure you have them. Contact us anytime with queries. info@neworleansairlift.org or 347.784.5226

**LESSONS FROM THE MUSIC BOX:**
Everybody who contributed did an outstanding job, but in our grand experiment some things did work better than others:

What worked best:
- Intuitively interactive interfaces (jumping on floorboards, pressing buttons, climbing stairs).
- Houses where the instrumentation was truly integrated into the architecture.
- Invented instruments that least resembled real instruments because they encouraged experimentation whereas anything resembling a “real instrument” felt more intimidating because there is a “way” to play it.
- Instruments that required the player to be visibly gestural when playing – so walking up the spiral drone staircase, opening a window or creating a gestural aspect of the house/architecture itself so that the house itself had gestures. Performative qualities are a huge part of this project.

Some Key Aspects of what Musical Architecture has come to mean for us:

1. Psycho-spatial acoustics: The village we created used localized sound sources which meant that a stroll through town would present different acoustic qualities as you moved through the space. In performances there was no perfect view or perfect sound. We like this and it makes a performance of musical architecture automatically shoot for a different result than a traditional staged performance using a PA.

2. Familiar vs. unfamiliar: As much as we want to explore new ideas, an aspect of The Music Box that really worked for visitors was the magic of the familiar presented in an unfamiliar way – meaning the fact that our musical town sort of resembled a real town with overhead power lines, a town square etc, this familiarity in some ways made the magic accessible. That said, we are open to ideas that don't look like houses or speak to anything familiar –but we will want to know WHY you want to go this way.

3. Performative qualities: What sets our project apart from other projects that seem to touch on similar themes of space and sound is that we treat our musical architecture as a platform for performance. Please always keep in mind the performance experience when coming up with your ideas. This is not just an experience to be walked through our touched. Imagine what your idea looks like and sounds like, but also imagine it from the perspective of an audience member attending a concert.
3.1- Strategic Plan

New Orleans Airlift

Strategic Plan 2014-2017
New Orleans Airlift Mission Statement

“Collaborating to inspire wonder, connect communities and foster opportunities through the creation of experimental public art”

Organizational Values

• Collaboration
• Strong Artistic Vision
• Reputation for Quality
• Realized Wonder
• Experimental and Unique Art
• Willing to Take Risks
• Trustworthy in Our Community

• Honoring Place
• Supportive of One Another
• Accountability
• Flexibility
• Diversity in Programming, Staff and Collaborators

Programs

Projects

❖ Public Art
❖ Cross Community Collaborations
❖ Interactive Educational Experiences

Services

❖ Creative Consultancy
❖ Atelier: Fabrication & Training
New Orleans Airlift Three-Year Priority Goals

1. Grow a Robust and Diverse Finding Base
2. Possess a Centralized Workspace and Multi-Use Center of Operations
3. Obtain Nonprofit Statuses
4. Promote Clear and Effective Branding
5. Maintain an Effective Staffing Structure
6. Offer Programming in Support of our Mission and Values
7. Continue to Expand our Circle of Collaborators: Artists, Educators, Organizations and Funders
8. Continually Incorporate Organizational Self-Reflection

Goal #1: Maintain Sufficient and Diverse Funding Base
Airlift has continually grown its annual budget. They have doubled their budget from 2013 to 2014 from $173,569 to $355,150 as a result of receiving a $225,200 grant from Educational Foundation of America and close to $71,000 from corporate sponsorship and $57,500 from various partnerships. Airlift had six different sources of funds in 2103 and five different sources in 2014. While this infusion of funds allowed Airlift to expand their operational capacity, it also presents new challenges as the diversification of funding sources shrunk, which is a threat to the long-term sustainability of the organization.

Airlift Revenue Sources

![Pie charts showing revenue sources in 2013 and 2014]

Strategy #1: Develop Sustainable Financial Plan
To address the uneven distribution of revenue sources while planning for growth, staff reviewed the sources of funding for the last two years and projected their financial needs and goals in dollar amounts and diversification of funding sources. Airlift’s goal is for their budget to continue to increase from $343,150 in 2014, to $550,000 in 2015 and $650,000 in 2016 and reflect a healthy diversification of revenue sources. To achieve this goal Airlift will need to aggressively solicit financial support from foundations, corporations, individuals and marketing of their revenue generating activities while maintaining fidelity to Airlift’s values.
Comparison of Revenue Sources

New Orleans Airlift Fund Diversification Goals

2015

Projected Total Budget $550,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Budget</th>
<th>Budget Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Fee For Service</td>
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<td>Individual Donations</td>
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<td>Art Sales</td>
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2016
Projected Total Budget
$650,000

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<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
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<td>Corporate Partnerships</td>
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<td>Individual Donations</td>
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<td>Ticket Sales</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Sales</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>$6,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy #2: Create Revenue Generating Capacity through an Atelier Fabrication & Training, Creative Consultancies and Offering Interactive Educational Experiences

The 2015 and 2016 financial plan anticipates the development of three robust revenue generating components: the Atelier Fabrication & Training will respond to the many requests for Airlift’s fabrication assistance, Creative Consultancy will provide production and advisory services and our interactive educational experiences work with educational institutions to develop classes in musical architecture. Achievement of these financial goals are also dependent on Airlift moving into a space which allows expanded fabrication capacities as well as sufficient staffing to insure there are interns and/or volunteers to help with the fabrication.

Revenue Generation Services:

Creative Consultancy

Airlift’s consulting services are based in their work with experimental artists and radical culture bearers that create immersive worlds. They carefully curate each place and event, sparing no detail to produce experiential happenings which aims to bring all sorts of people together to create spectacular and once-in-a-lifetime moments. Airlift also works with artists, magazines and organizations arriving in New Orleans to connect them to the cultural community. Sample consultancies include:

- event design & curation
- art direction
- talent scout
- custom art installations
- host visiting artists
- facilitate research for magazine and newspaper articles/profiles

Previous clients include Microsoft, Arena Homme Magazine, and the New Orleans Museum of Art, Artslink, Dutch people, Vice, Redbull, New York Times, Bust Magazine, Fader, Canal + (France), Arie (Germany/France), I Heart Magazine, SPIN Magazine, Mother, and Nokia.

Airlift Atelier Fabrication Services:

Airlift operates a custom art fabrication and production studio led by our Master Fabricator whose past clients include the artists Camille Henrot and Swoon; art institutions The

Acting as a traditional Atelier, the fabrication studio, under the direction of the Master Fabricator, will utilize requests for his fabrication skills as a training opportunity for the artists and university students to learn building techniques and proper and safe use of tools, building techniques, and use of materials; both on the job and in the classroom.

*Interactive Educational Experiences*
Airlift works with educational institutions to develop artist talks, design/build workshops and classes, university collaborations and lectures on the implications of public interaction with sound and how performance informs design. Past clients include Georgia Tech College of Architecture and Shreveport Regional Arts Council.

**Strategy #3: Develop Internal Capacity for Financial Tracking**

Airlift currently receives funds from a number of different sources. The National Performance Network serves as Airlift’s financial agent for the purposes of Foundation grants and they keep their own sets of books for the other funding received. There is not the current staff capacity to develop and monitor a financial tracking system for the different accounts. They have already secured the contractual services of a bookkeeper to organize their books and develop an effective financial tracking system. This function should be absorbed internally by the beginning of the next fiscal year.

**Goal #1 Grow a Robust and Diverse Funding Base Next Steps**

- Creation of a business plan for atelier fabrication services including pricing structure. (November 2014).
- Establish financial goals and criteria for corporate partnerships. (November 2014)
- Implement intern program to assist in fabrication services, marketing and outreach (on-going)
- Create merchandising options through website (January 2015)
- Institute a financial tracking system capturing the different revenue centers (March 2015)
- Crowd source through kickstarter a minimum of one project every two years (on-going)
- Initiate atelier fabrication and training services (April 2015)
- Expand a network of individual donors (May 2015)
- Develop a membership plan (May 2015)
- Absorb bookkeeping function internally (July 2015)

**Goal #2: Centralize Workspace to Multi-Use Base of Operations**

Airlift does not have a current base of operations. Staff meetings are held at staff person’s houses and fabrication work takes place at various sites across the city. Programming occurs in different sites in the city and around the world. This arrangement, while adequate in the organizations early years is no longer efficient, nor desirable.
Strategy #1: Secure a Multi-Use Base of Operations

In order to expand their reach, especially as it relates to their educational experiences and fabrication services, Airlift wants to bring their work under one roof and commit to being rooted in a community. They have identified a site and are under negotiations to secure it but are aware that they need to come up with alternative sites in case the location falls through. The hope is to move into a new space by the end of 2014.

Strategy #2: Apply Criteria for a Multi-Use Site in case an Alternative is needed.

While Airlift believes they have found the ideal space they realize that they need to be prepared to find another location. To guide their search they have developed criteria for a multi-use space.

Criteria for a Multi-Use Space
- In metropolitan New Orleans area
- Capacity for on-site fabrication
- Capacity for office space
- Accessible to audiences and educational partners
- Has large doors to accommodate large art pieces
- Adequate storage space
- Over 2500 square feet with high ceilings and large doors
- Metal or cement block construction
- Commercial power service
- Appropriately zoned
- Smooth concrete floors

Goal #2 Possess a Centralized Workspace and Multi-Use Center of Operations Next Steps
- Finalize negotiations on land and building (October 2014)
- If negotiation fails, identify new site meeting criteria (December 2014)
- Identify moving and building retrofitting costs (December 2014)
- Develop 2015 and 2016 operational budget incorporating facility costs (December 2015)
- Publicize new location to Airlift stakeholders (February 2015)

Goal #3: Obtain Nonprofit Status

Currently Airlift has filed with the state of Louisiana as a nonprofit but is not recognized as a 501 (C) (3) by the federal government. The National Performance Network serves as their fiscal agent for the purpose of receipt of Foundation grants. Decisions are made by the six person staff and communicated to a five person Advisory Board. They realize that a lack of nonprofit status has limited their ability to receive larger art and educational focused Foundation support. Airlift realizes that they need to embrace some form of legal organizational structure as they expand and have met with a number of attorneys to discuss different options. In light of their planned embrace of revenue generating activities through their creative consultancy, atelier
fabrication and educational services they briefly explored forming a Limited Liability Corporation but have determined that Airlift is best suited to becoming a federally recognized nonprofit.

**Strategy #1: File the Necessary paperwork to become a 501 (c)(3) Organization.**

Airlift is acutely aware that in formally becoming a nonprofit they need to be sensitive to their branding and the verbiage used to explain what they do and how they achieve their mission.

**Strategy #2: Develop a Board Of Directors**

As a nonprofit they will have to have a Board of Directors. It is their hope that the majority of the Advisory Board will want to shift into that new role and be the foundation for the new Board. However, Airlift wants to assure that they will be successful and will look to recruit additional members who value Airlift’s mission and possess the necessary skillsets to support the organization.

**Goal #3 Obtain Nonprofit Status**

**Next Steps**

- Hire an attorney to begin paperwork filing process with federal government for 501 (c)(3) status (January 2015)
- Discuss new direction with Advisory Board and determine which members want to join Board of Directors (October 2014)
- Recruit additional members for Board of Directors (June 2015)
- Insure diversity among Board members in recruitment efforts. (June 2015)
- Develop Board of Directors By-laws (September 2015)
- Develop organizational policies and procedures (October 2015)

**Goal #4: Maintain Clear Branding**

Up until this fall there were three different websites highlighting specific Airlift programs as well as the larger organizations. Airlift does have a Facebook page and a blog and sporadic presence on other forms of social media. As Airlift program grows and with the establishment of a permanent physical site in the community, the organization realizes it must have a consistent ‘branded’ message in their web passed presence. Their goals for their marketing and branding are:

- Maintain a specific voice and consistent message about the work and philosophy of Airlift
- Disseminate information about events
- Participate in community conversation
- Expand their network both locally and internationally

Their target audience for branding efforts is a complex mix of local neighborhoods, artists, funders, partners, collaborators and the media. Realizing that each audience has specific information needs, in order to get their information on different web-based information platforms, Airlift has developed a multi-prong approach to their marketing.

**Strategy #1 Revise Airlift Website**

Working with a webpage development company, Inspired Storytellers Collective, Airlift will be unveiling a new website in early October. The website will replace the other two sites, one of which will be archived. This clean, clear site has the work of Airlift divided into projects,
services, and collaborators. The blog will be incorporated into the web site as will an online merchandise store. As they pursue 501(c)(3) status they are reviewing the verbiage describing the work of the organization to insure it complies with the requirements of nonprofit activity.

Strategy #2 Focus Social Media Efforts

In recognition that social media marketing is a complicated and full-time endeavor, they recognize that having an intern tasked with this responsibility may be counterproductive. Airlift has decided that they will focus their energies on three platforms (Facebook, Tumblr and Instagram) which best match staff capacity and their audience market. The External Affairs Consultant (Jay Pennington) will have the primary responsibility for Airlift’s social media presence. The Artistic Director (Delaney Martin) will contribute to the Instagram site and the Operations Manager (Tori Bush) will contribute to the Tumblr site.

Strategy #3 Remain Current on Social Media Marketing Strategies

The social media world is ever-changing with new technologies and continual shifts in user patterns. Because Airlift will, for the short-term be handling their social media presence internally and have built a website which allows them to enter and edit content, they will be more effective with occasional training on new approaches and understanding the algorithms of search engines.

The three staff responsible for Airlift’s social media presence should schedule training quarterly on effective nonprofit social media marketing. Ideally this training can be provided on a pro-bono basis or given in exchange for recognition of the trainer’s contribution.

Goal #4 Promote Clear and Effective Branding Next Steps

- Revise mission statement to insure nonprofit compliance (September 2104)
- Publicize the release of new website through mailing list (October 2015)
- Estimate the costs of a marketing budget to pay for individual to be paid to maintain Airlift’s social media presence and incorporate these costs in future funding request(January 2015)
- Seek local social media expertise to provide quarterly tutorials to Airlift staff (March 2015)

Goal #5: Maintain an Effective Staffing Structure

Airlift has six staff- four work full-time and two part-time. Each position works with a high degree of autonomy while focused on achieving collective goals. Airlift’s goal was to create greater clarity around everyone’s roles, identify those issues that should be decided collaboratively among the staff and most importantly assess if Airlift’s identify and future is predominately dependent upon the contributions of its founders, Delaney Martin and Jay Pennington. Delaney Martin has been serving as the Executive Director as well the Artistic Director. Delaney expressed her interest in pursuing her art in venues separate from Airlift in addition to continuing her role as Artistic Director and creating art with the organization.

Strategy #1: Hire an Executive Director in 2015

In recognition that as Airlift grows there will be a growth in administrative responsibilities and a need for dedicated artistic oversight, a new position of Executive Director should be included in the 2015 budget. In consultation with the Advisory Board Airlift should assess if the new Executive Director position needs to be a full time position.

A staffing assessment in which all staff was individually interviewed and the results were shared in the full group to identify both gaps and duplication of effort. The staff also took time to
identify all the components of moving a project from conceptualization to implementation. Once the different task was identified, staff created a grid of responsibilities for each staff member which drive the development of new job descriptions for each staff which are included as Appendix B of the strategic plan.

Strategy #2: Adopt New Job Descriptions
The identified staff roles and job descriptions assume that the Executive Director position will be filled in the next year. There are specific responsibilities where the time demands change considerably over the course of the year depending on status of the projects. With the planned departure of the Administrative Assistant and the growing administrative demands of the Operations Manager, the organization will need to continually re-assess the distribution of responsibilities and the need to create a Program Manager position.
### Airlift Staff Roles

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airlift Executive Director</th>
<th>Technical Director/Taylor Shephard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face of the Organization</td>
<td>Logistical Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor Cultivation</td>
<td>Producer of Material Things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of Website and Newsletter</td>
<td>Tech Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artistic Director/Delaney Martin</th>
<th>External Affairs Consultant/ Jay Pennington</th>
<th>Project Engineer/Atelier Manager Christian</th>
<th>Operations Manager/Tori Bush</th>
<th>Program Manager/Lauren Domino</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face of the Organization</td>
<td>Corporate Funding</td>
<td>Oversight of Atelier</td>
<td>Research and Write Grants</td>
<td>Travel &amp; Lodging Logistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artistic Vision Community</td>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
<td>Producer of Material Things</td>
<td>Back Office Support</td>
<td>Volunteer &amp; Intern Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach Donor Cultivation</td>
<td>Publicity (External Communications)</td>
<td>Artist Liaison</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Production Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval of Website and Newsletter</td>
<td>Content Selection-Web Site/Videos</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Visual Documentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The staffing analysis, resulting job descriptions led to an in-depth discussions about staff roles. These discussions prompted further exploration into the ways in which all staff could contribute to the artistic vision of Airlift. The result was the creation of a process by which all staff could bring potential projects up to consideration for adoption by Airlift.

**Strategy #3: Encourage all staff to suggest and champion new Airlift Projects using the agreed upon criteria and process**

It was agreed that regardless of how a project idea is generated; a specific Airlift staff person has to be attached to and serve as Sponsor for all Projects.

### Airlift New Orleans Project Criteria

- Collaborative in Scope
- Involves New Orleans artists
- Genre Bending
- Open to feedback from Airlift staff
- Empowers and involves those not self identified as artists
✓ Draws from the larger community
✓ Has reach outside immediate community/national and international resonance
✓ Reaches unlikely audiences
✓ Under the radar art
✓ Eposes new cultural forms
✓ Creates wonder and awe
✓ Occurs in a public space
✓ All inclusive
✓ Is new work
✓ Always increases options for the audience and artist
✓ Internationally ambitious in scope

Process for considering new projects:

• All Airlift staff is encouraged to bring potential projects to the group for consideration
• As part of staff gathering clear time is set to vet new project
• As part of the consideration process:
  o Criteria must be satisfied
  o Vague timeframe to implement project
  o Estimated budget
  o Concepts for funding project
  o Identification of outside resources to make project happen
  o Assessment of how project fits with current and projected commitments
  o Identify what communities are engaged
  o Sponsor/Champion of the project has to have a high degree of personal commitment to seeing it through

Sponsor/Executive Producer/Creative Producer Role

◆ Introduces and Sponsors the project/program
◆ Communicates with Artist(s) (in tandem with fabricator and Program Assistant)
◆ Serves as the hub, check in with everyone throughout the process
◆ Tacks and complies with budget
◆ Works with publicity team
◆ Communicates needs to team
◆ Keeps project/program on schedule
◆ Brings things back to the group

Airlift staff has recently started meeting as a group on a bi-weekly basis which has improved communication and helped everyone stay abreast of the status of various project activities.

Strategy #4 : Continually assess if staff functions are more efficiently completed using salary
versus contractual staff.

As each Airlift project has its own set of timeframes, challenges, and specialized focus some require unique skill sets which may or may not carry over to other organizational activities. Rather than stretching staff in too many directions at once, Airlift should continually assess which tasks are better accomplished hiring skilled short-term positions that bring expertise to the organization to train our staff for the future and free them up to do their jobs in the long term.

Strategy #5. Continue to hold Bi-weekly Staff Meetings

These weekly gathering serve a useful purpose to keeping everyone informed. On non-meeting weeks it was suggested that an informational email be sent out to keep everyone on the same page.

Strategy #6 Increase the Diversity of Airlift Staff

While Airlift’s programming is diverse, its team is not. The organization will be strengthened by incorporating more diverse points of view in every aspect of their work and processes. As the organization grows it needs to maximize opportunities for hiring people of color for future positions and attracting people of color on the board.

Goal #5 Maintain and Effective Staffing Structure Next Steps

- Implement bi-weekly summary emails to staff on non-meeting weeks. (September 2014)
- In light of departure of part-time administrative assistant, re-assess future staffing needs. (November 2014)
- As new positions come on line or there are vacancies to fill, recruit with the goal of maximizing diversity of the staff team (ongoing)
- Create staff budget for 2015 (October 2015)
- Develop database of internship needs and roles (December 2014)
- Create roster of intern positions (September 2014)
- Secure funding for Executive Director position (January 2015)
- Recruit for new Executive Director (February 2015)
- Establish volunteer and intern recruitment strategy (February 2015)
- Create benchmarks for internship involvement (April 2015)
- Create process by which revenue generated from Atelier fabrication is factored into staff salaries (December 2015)

Goal #6 Offer Programming in Support of Our Mission and Values

Airlift anticipates offering between 9 and 11 projects a year, in addition to events resulting from their creative consultancy. These projects are:

- Musical Houses
  - 2-3 build projects in New Orleans (ongoing project, for next 10+ years to complete the village)
  - 2-3 concerts per year
  - 1-2 build and concert event outside of New Orleans

14
2 Staff Generated Projects
1 new non Airlift Staff Project

Every project has an experiential educational component geared to community members, school age youth or other.

Airlift is committed to offering new programming on a regular basis which highlights the diversity of artistic expression through unlikely partnerships. Airlift’s portfolio of projects are designed to be ever evolving and based on collaborative enterprises between local artists and artists from other places. The goal of their work is to create a climate for creative synergy between often divergent artistic medium. Some of these collaborations bear fruit and some do not but they are committed to this process. In many ways, everything Airlift does is an experiment.

Strategy #1: Develop Panels to Identify Potential Collaborators

Given its unique process of relying on their international network to identify and reach out to artists for potential involvement with Airlift, the challenge is to develop a process where the projects undertaken do not become self-referential based solely on Airlift’s existing relationships.

In order to expand the universe of artists who potentially would engage with Airlift, a panel comprised of different types of artists and innovators will assist Airlift in their curatorial efforts. Airlift will convene the panel twice a year, provide them with the project criteria and ask for their assistance in identifying potential artists. Artists that the panel identify will be approached to gauge their interest in working with Airlift and if they are interested will be asked to develop a proposal which, if agreed to by Airlift and contingent on funding will be added to their project pipeline.

Strategy #2 Incorporate the New Project Criteria to Requests for Proposals

Once artists have been identified and initial discussions have begun, Airlift will ask the artists to submit a proposal using the elements of the new project criteria. Instituting the protocol in which any member of Airlift can bring a potential project forward using the newly developed project criteria is one strategy to insure regular and diverse programming. To expand the reach of potential artists Airlift will reach out to specific artist they have identified with targeted Request for Proposals using the project protocol as the basis for proposals.

Goal #6 Offer Programming in Support of Our Mission and Values Next steps

- Develop list of projects scheduled for 2015 (December 2014)
- Develop educational component for Atelier interns (February 2015)
- Identify list of potential panel participants (March 2015)
- Convene artists panel twice a year (May 2015, November 2015)
- Research and reach out to artists identified by panel (June 2015–)
- Develop a minimum of one new project from Non-Airlift staff annually (January 2016)

Goal #7 Continue to Expand Circle of Collaborators: Artistic, Educators, Organizations and Funders

Airlift accomplishes its goals through its partnerships and collaborators. Its Partners provide in-kind and cash assistance, human capital through volunteers and interns and of course most importantly the artists themselves. Specific projects drive the identification of potential partners and collaborators.
Artists

The artistic collaborations form the backbone of Airlift's work. As part of its strategic plan Airlift plans to expand their reach in identification of artists through the use of panels and creation of criteria to vet potential artistic collaborations. In the years to come Airlift plans to expand the types of media in which our artists work as well as the process by which they come to Airlift's attention.

Educators

Every Airlift project has an educational component which is targeted to the audience/participants of the event. Airlift has worked with local schools, community associations and universities to develop and tailor our educational experiences to their group. In the last year Airlift has partnered with formal educational institutions and universities to provide lectures and design build classes.

Organizations

Airlift's enthusiasm for unlikely collaborations encompasses more than the artist collaborations they develop. Working with vast array of community organizations, neighborhood groups, industrial and art spaces Airlift forms partnerships to reach their goal of making unique accessible public art.

Corporations

Through Airlift's creative consultancy they work with corporation and businesses to create custom art installations, design and stage unique events, provide art direction and talent scout activities. Airlift brings a singularly unique perspective to collaborate with corporations to provide them the benefits of our discerning eye and deep knowledge of the cultural and artistic landscape.

Strategy #1 Create Criteria for Corporate Partnerships

Corporate partnerships present specific challenges with respect to accepting funds to either underwrite project or to stage events as part of their creative consultancy. Given these sensitivities, appropriateness of support and types of corporate partnerships will be assessed based on pre-existing criteria.

Strategy #2 Continue to Promote Unlikely Collaboration

Collaborators bring their ideas, aesthetic, and vision to Airlift. It is of primary importance that collaborators share the vision of Airlift. In identifying collaborators Airlift looks at their past collaborative experience, assesses their ability to let ideas evolve as the collaborations move forward. Airlift is fundamentally experimenters and they acknowledge that some experiments in collaborations do not always work. Airlift is committed to working through their concentric circles of relationships to identify collaborators and to create unlikely collaborations recognizing that these collaborators are a part of a long term relationship and engagement.

Goal #7 Continue to Expand Circle of Collaborators: Artistic, Educators, Organizations and Funders Next Steps

- Create criteria for corporate sponsorship (October 2014)
- Develop incentives for volunteers (March 2015)
- Develop selection of corporate packages for our creative consultancy services (March 2915)
- Develop levels of recognition for in-kind donations (March 2015)
• Develop levels of sponsorships for individuals and businesses (April 2015)

Goal #8: Continually Incorporate Organizational Self-Reflection

Airlift wants to be accountable to themselves and others on a continual basis. Moving forward they plan to build evaluation and self-reflections into all of their work and processes. The focus of Airlift’s evaluation and reflection is their programs, internal processes and external processes with the larger community.

Strategy #1 Schedule Staff Time for Purposeful Reflection

Bi-weekly staff meeting is project up-date focused. They value and want to maintain their current problem solving and decision making structure using a group collaborative approach. To help them learn from their projects Airlift will institute a formal debriefing and create written documentation of what worked well and what didn’t to help in planning future events. Because it is so easy to get caught up in daily details, Airlift wants to plan for time to reflect on their processes and projects on an annual basis. To insure Airlift remains self reflective they will hold facilitated staff retreat annually. They also will institute a purely social dinner for the staff every three to six month.

Strategy #2 Strengthen Program Evaluation Activities

Airlift is interested in evaluating their programs along two dimensions; participation and impact. Up to now they have informally counted audience participation. To increase their evaluation of participation rates and impact, Airlift will have sign in sheets and impression books at all projects and events. Realizing that measuring impact is a difficult undertaking and Airlift is not equipped to undertake exhaustive evaluation efforts. Airlift will focus on school age audience members and the artist collaborators for their evaluation efforts in future years. Airlift will explore ways to work with the schools to measure impact and in the near term look to the project’s champion to father pre and post involvement information for artist collaborators.

Strategy 3# Assess Airlift’s Role in the Community

They also recognize their need for formal training about their work in a social construct. They have attended sessions from the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond which they found very helpful and illuminating. To build on these sessions they would they would like to on-going group sessions from the People Institute and other similar organizations on an on-going basis to increase their awareness and understanding.

Goal #8: Continually Incorporate Organizational Self-Reflection Next Steps

- Contact People’s Institute for follow up group session (October 2014)
- Develop impact questions for artists (May 2015)
- Create paper or on-line questionnaire for student participants (June 2015)
- Implement process to gather pre and post impact information through discussion with project champion (June 2015)
- Reach out to local universities to design school age impact questionnaire. (September 2015)
- Work with partner schools to implement process to gather impact information from students (January 2016)
Appendix A

Summary of Airlift’s Three Year Strategic Goals and Strategies

Goal #1: Maintain Sufficient and Diverse Funding Base
Strategy #1: Develop Sustainable Financial Plan
Strategy #2: Create Revenue Generating Capacity through an Atelier Fabrication and Training Center
Strategy #3: Develop Internal Capacity for Financial Tracking

Goal #2: Centralize Workspace to Multi-Use Base of Operations
Strategy #1: Secure a Multi-Use Base of Operations
Strategy #2: Develop Criteria for a Multi-Use Site in case an Alternative is needed

Goal #3: Obtain Nonprofit Status
Strategy #1: File the Necessary paperwork to become a 501 (c)(3) organization.
Strategy #2: Develop a Board Of Directors

Goal #4: Maintain Clear Branding
Strategy #1: Revise Airlift Website
Strategy #2: Focus Social Media Efforts
Strategy #3: Remain Current on Social Media Marketing Strategies

Goal #5: Maintain an Effective Staffing Structure
Strategy #1: Hire an Executive Director in 2015
Strategy #2: Adopt New Job Descriptions
Strategy #3: Encourage all staff to suggest and champion new Airlift Projects using the agreed upon criteria and process
Strategy #4: Continually assess if staff functions are more efficiently completed using salary versus contractual staff.
Strategy #5: Continue to hold Bi-weekly Staff Meetings
Strategy #6: Increase the Diversity of Airlift Staff

Goal #6: Offer Programming in Support of Our Mission and Values
Strategy #1: Develop an Artists Panel to Identify Potential Collaborators
Strategy #2: Incorporate the New Project Criteria to Requests for Proposals

Goal #7: Continue to Develop and Expand Collaborations and Partnerships
Strategy #1: Create Criteria for Corporate Partnerships
Strategy #2: Continue to Promote Unlikely Collaboration

Goal #8: Continually Incorporate Organizational Self-Reflection
Strategy #1: Schedule Staff Time for Purposeful Reflection
Strategy #2: Strengthen Program Evaluation Activities
Strategy #3: Assess Airlift’s Role in the Community
5.1- coLAB Donation Suggestions

**coLAB Transformer $10,000 +**

We are an organization with a "let's get it done" attitude. Our Conspirators are individuals and organizations that make our long hours and big ideas possible. These game changers provide us the financial resources that get projects to a whole new level. This group includes major underwriters for specific projects or significant support for general operations of the organization. We thank our Transformers by listing them as a primary organizational supporter on all promotional materials and listings.

**coLAB Generator - $5,000+**

One of our primary missions is to create new work that generates movement in our communities to live a more artistic and sustainable life. This sponsorship level promotes organizations and individuals to take a direct role in helping produce one of our core programs or events. A sponsorship at this level could underwrite a series oral history collections and artist workshops that generate a new theater or dance piece that is reflective of a contemporary issue. coLAB seeks to create work that is fun and responsive and our creators bring those projects to life.

**coLAB Activator $1,000+**

Let's get something started. Our Activators create opportunities where none existed before. They help provide start up support for projects that need a little boost. It doesn't take much to get a mural underway, or send a high school student the keys to a transformative summer, or give a choreographer some time to generate that new piece. Our Activators make the important messy work possible. They give us the power to follow the art and follow the need.

**coLABorator $100+**

We don't give out the term coLABorator easily. We work with a large network of artists, social advocates, and community partners that want to see art influence substantive change and communication. coLABorators are the lifeblood of our organization and contributors at this level not only get to use the designation but get to know that their donation will make the tireless work of a great many individuals just that much easier. Execution of ideas is collective but the generation of ideas is individual, and it is the power of individuals that make great things possible.

**THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS…**

This is a current listing of some of the new and ongoing programs that have opportunities for public and anonymous commission support. Your donation can be earmarked to nurture a new HearME Verbatim Theater project, or provide a student the opportunity to take part in an otherwise out of reach transformative educational experience, or enable a public art installation that educates and motivates a community to make positive environmental actions.
Our collaborators are cooking up new and interesting projects all the time, check in with our Director of Community Connectivity John Keller at jpkeller@colab-arts.org to find ways to make things happen.

$5,000 +

**HearME: TrueSelves** play commission (Year-Long through World Premier)

**HearME: Latino Voices** play commission - a collaborative effort between coLAB Arts, The Rutgers Center for Latino Arts and Culture, and New Brunswick Tomorrow to develop an oral history based new work that shares the experiences, struggles, triumphs, and realities of the central NJ and Rutgers Latin communities.

**Motion New Dance Works** project commission (Year-Long through World Premier) 4 choreographers will be working with 4 different social service organizations to conduct oral history interviews, forums, and community charettes to generate source material for imaginative new movement work. The artists seek to move audiences to consider the realities of many who are frequently marginalized and ignored and used the form of dance to do it. This commission will be a primary project supporter and will aid the work throughout the yearlong development phase included the world premier of these new works in New Brunswick in the Spring of 2016

$1,000 +

**theaterMAKER Scholarship** - provide a full scholarship to one deserving student to participate in our theaterMAKERS summer immersive which includes an intensive two week series of workshops on how to create civic minded socially engaged original work, as well as our three day trip to the renowned Contemporary American Theater Festival

**OrphanageReading Commission** - bring a new play to life but allowing a writer to have a staged reading with a full cast and invited audience.