Mission Statement
(Long Form)

The Mattress Factory is an artist-centered museum, international residency program and renowned producer and presenter of installation art. We say “yes” to artists, offering time and space to dream and realize projects in our hometown, Pittsburgh, PA. We invite audiences from around the world and around the corner to step inside, immerse and connect with the artistic process.

We are forward-thinking, ambitious and flexible. Through open-ended collaborations, we work with artists at all stages of their careers to develop, produce and present site-specific installations, events and education programs. Responsive to the changing needs of artists and our communities, we facilitate opportunities for artists and audiences to challenge themselves and assume the risk that comes with making and encountering art.

We believe making art is an essential part of civic and cultural life. Leading by example, we set new standards for supporting artists, engaging audiences and mentoring the next generation of arts professionals. Together, we take a leap into the unknown, rallying to the artist’s vision and going the extra mile to make art happen.
At the outset of its Strategic Plan process, the Mattress Factory, a 44-year-old institution that experienced significant transition in the past years, realized it needed to re-articulate its identity. The Museum developed these six core “attributes” that will guide and inform the organization’s voice and direction.

**Artist-centered.**
Supporting artists is at the center of everything we do. Artists play a vital role in society and help us think and perceive the world around us. We work hard to build trust and offer residency, installation and exhibition experiences where artists feel cared for as they open themselves and their practices to new possibilities.

**Open.**
We aim to be inclusive, welcoming and make contemporary art more accessible and more fun by bringing artists and audiences up close to one another through our exhibitions and programs. We are always willing to try new things, and help others determine their own path. We strive to renew the spirit of free inquiry and respect each other’s freedom to think and feel openly.

**Process-driven.**
Quality, for us, is defined by the process. Our productions and programs are open collaborations built on dialogue where we always try to say yes and are open to wherever the journey leads. With a hands-on, can-do attitude, intelligence, for us, comes from doing, insight from redoing and wisdom from good execution.

**Bold.**
Our programs are new, different, often unconventional and always exciting and unexpected. We encourage everyone to dare to dream and discover the excitement of the artistic process. Embracing an intrepid spirit, we never apologize for the art. We support each other as we embark on new journeys inside brave spaces and outside comfort zones.

**Site-specific.**
We know the place and context of where we live and work matters. We believe supporting artists as they explore and build relationships between their practice and the sites of their work is what makes every project unique. We are proud to call Pittsburgh home, and we are honored to have the opportunity to introduce artists to our city and the communities throughout the region.

**Neighborly.**
We care about our neighborhood and the people next door. We approach everything we do with a genuine, down-to-earth attitude. We show up for each other, consistently. We are present, build trust, and strive to create authentic connections between artists and our neighbors in the Northside, throughout Pittsburgh and the region.
Milestones

By 2025:

We continue to work with regional, national and international artists at all stages of their career to produce their dream projects and connect their ideas with our audiences. In so doing, we enhance our role as a cultural landmark based in Pittsburgh, PA.

We re-structure our artistic program as a staggered calendar featuring site-specific installations, events and education programs, while offering holistic support to artists.

We enhance our visitors’ experience and educational programs. We are committed to creating spaces that are accessible, brave and inclusive, striving to make contemporary art open to all. Revamped outreach, marketing and programming will invite visitors into the process of making art.

We double-down on our commitment to the Northside and serve as an essential part of Pittsburgh’s civic and cultural life. We will build out our role as a neighborhood resource and ally for diverse populations, and we create and strengthen community partnerships.

To build the diversity of our network and the international reputation of the Mattress Factory, we will grow our capacity via national, international and regional partnerships. We amplify our engagement with current and past Mattress Factory artists, curators, staff, board members and supporters.

We drive toward sound infrastructure and a financially sustainable growth model, which offers nimble flexibility to support innovative projects and initiatives.

Six objectives define the desired milestones set by the Strategic Direction.

01 ONPOSITIONING

The Mattress Factory solidifies its position as a cultural leader locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

02 PROGRAMMING

Our artistic program is re-structured as a staggered calendar featuring site-specific installations, events, and education programs.

03 OUTREACH

Programmatic and institutional marketing deepen relationships with current attendees and build new patronage with various demographics.

04 BOARD + COMMUNITY

We continue to build and sustain a diverse and engaged Board and Community.

05 FUNDRAISING + REVENUE

We expand contributed and earned revenues in order to better support artists and engage diverse audiences.

06 CAPITAL + CAPACITY

We strengthen capital and human resources, including growth of our endowment and working capital and enhanced capacity for our staff.
An important component of our Plan is to solidify our position as a cultural leader locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. To better define our role in these sectors, we developed a position statement that celebrates what makes the Mattress Factory unique.

**Position Statement**

The Mattress Factory is a leading contemporary art museum and international residency program. We support artists and believe making art is essential to civic and cultural life. Proud to call Pittsburgh home, we are a vital part of the Northside and welcome artists into the neighborhood whether they are from around the world or from around the corner.

We are artist-centered. Focused on process, we offer open-ended, production and exhibition residencies where we commit to the artist without needing to know what they will create.

We aim to challenge conventional understandings of what museums can be. Our programs follow wherever artists’ process leads, and audiences explore wherever their curiosity takes them. Together, we take a leap into the unknown as we make art happen.

Our revised mission and new position statement define our overall vision and voice. Anchors provide further specific guidance on our programs and community engagement.
Artistic

Under our new Strategic Plan, we change our existing model of large, less frequent group shows to forefront the residency and artist support. Our new program will feature one artist or small group at a time, staggering more exhibitions throughout the year and facilitating holistic and undivided support for our artists.

Education

Over the next three years, our Education Department reinforces its focus on three areas: artist-centered programs, visitor engagement and the Northside community. Our programs continue to guide participants – children, teens and adults alike – to take risks encountering, discussing and creating art, through the support of dedicated, learner-centered educators.

Well-resourced institutional and programmatic marketing deepen relationships with current attendees and build new patronage with various demographics, including both international and regional audiences, as well as Northside and Pittsburgh affinity groups.
The Mattress Factory continues to build and sustain a diverse and engaged Board and Community of a size, composition, and generosity on par with its artistic and operational ambitions.

**Board of Directors**
- Strengthen the Board’s role as external-facing ambassadors
- Enhance Board diversity and engagement, including through potential Board growth from 18 current directors (2022)
- Increase Board giving to a greater percentage of annual expenses

**Community**
- Explore the creation of strategic advisory committees and other opportunities to build out Northside relationships and industry expertise, respectively
- Enhance engagement with Mattress Factory alumni, including past artists-in-residence and guest curators and former Board members

**STRATEGY 4**
**BOARD + COMMUNITY.**

The Mattress Factory diversifies and expands contributed and earned revenues in order to better support artists, engage diverse audiences and enhance its long-term sustainability.

**Contributed revenue goals and strategies include:**
- Grow individual giving, particularly outside Board of Directors
- Introduce targeted fundraising campaigns, with particular attention on corporate partners
- Reinvigorate and expand membership; grow membership base into donors
- Accelerate planned giving opportunities

**Earned income goals and strategies include:**
- Build out Mattress Factory Shop, Café and event rentals as revenue drivers and community forums
- Diversify and expanded revenue streams outside of admissions
- Develop artist residence into community-driven resource and modest revenue source

**STRATEGY 5**
**FUNDRAISING + REVENUE.**
The Mattress Factory continues to strengthen its capital and human resources, including growth of our endowment and working capital and enhanced capacity for our staff.

Finance and capital efforts include:
- Capital improvements campaign in 2021-2023
- Endowment growth through limited annual draw
- Establishment and growth of reserve account
- Feasibility studies in preparation for Mattress Factory 2027 50th Anniversary

Investments in administration and personnel include:
- Enhanced diversity of staff, particularly leadership
- Built-out capacity through additional hires and strategic budget increases
- Conversion of key current positions from part-time to full-time
- Market-competitive and equitable compensation at all levels

“As soon as I stepped into the immersive art exhibit of Luftwerk’s ‘Open Square,’ I felt a wave of emotion more intense than I’ve ever experienced at an art museum.”

– Sam, Museum Visitor