



ENSEMBLE THEATRE CINCINNATI

ENSEMBLE THEATRE CINCINNATI DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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CINCINNATI

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RUTH DARWIN SAWHOOK

JOHN



ENSEMBLE
THEATRE
CINCINNATI

By: Lauren Sawhook

WHO ARE WE?



Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati is a professional theatre dedicated to producing world and regional premieres of works that often explore compelling social issues. We fulfill our mission through our stage productions and educational outreach programs that enlighten, enliven, enrich, and inspire our audiences. Each year, we produce the best in contemporary theatre and attract a diverse audience of 30,000+ to more than 220 performances annually. We serve the heart of Cincinnati's historic Over-the-Rhine neighborhood and maintain a steadfast belief in the transformative power of the arts to create vibrant, sustainable communities (*Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati, 2023*).



Beasley and Emmy Rice in MLM Is for Murder (Or, Your Side Hustle Is Killing Us).
Photo by Mikki Schaffner.



OUR VALUE

PERSONAL

90%

of students expressed an increased desire to seek out more involvement in the arts after attending a Fairy Godmother Performance (*Learn & Engage | Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati, n.d.*).

85%

students who participate in Prelude Programs said that they felt closer to their peers after completing the experience (*Learn & Engage | Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati, n.d.*).

SOCIETAL

73%

of Americans said that the arts provided meaning in their lives and were a positive experience in a troubled world (*AFTA: Arts + art fact sheet - ww2.americansforthearts.org*).

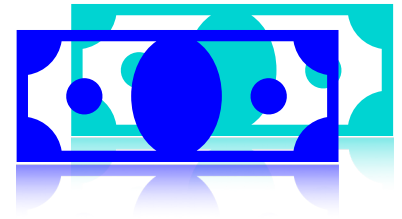
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weeks of visual arts participation has been shown to increase the resiliency and neural connectivity of the brain, making for increased self-awareness and better memory processing (*AFTA: Arts + art fact sheet - ww2.americansforthearts.org*).

FINANCIAL GOALS

2022 Income Total	10% of Income	FY 2024 Income Goal
\$3,225,426	\$322,542	\$3,457,968

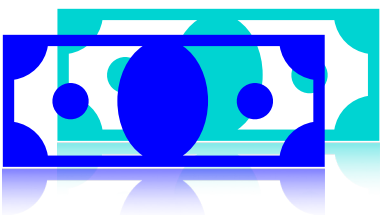
Above is our income goal that we hope to obtain in this next fiscal year. We decided that to best benchmark what our next year's goals should be, we should increase our income from last year by 10%. This gives us a clear and attainable goal in order for us to grow and continue to serve our community (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati Form 990, 2021). We hope to do this in a few ways including building up cash reserves to use in times of financial instability in order to help with the unpredictability of income (Luttrull, 2013). It is also important that we reforecasted our budget for this next year as it is more relevant than purely going off of our income from last year. This should continue to be looked at throughout the fiscal year to ensure it continues to be relevant in regards to current standings of the organizational finances (Finke, 2022).

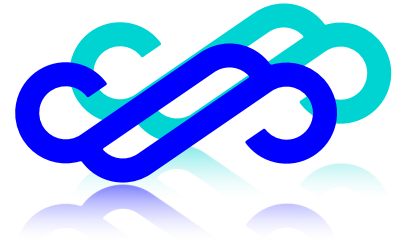


FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

1. TICKET SALES

- Estimated earned: \$600,000
 - This estimate is due to last year's ticket sales being at about \$580,000, so this is a healthy next step in terms of goals for fundraising (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati Form 990, 2021).
- We will focus on marketing our shows and promoting them to our social media audience, as well as the local community in Cincinnati.
- We will have the entire theatre season to earn this income, taking us all the way until our next fiscal year.
- Volunteers, and staff will be needed to run the box office as well as staff to market the shows, help with the production of the shows, and financial staff will be needed to handle the income that is received from ticket sales.

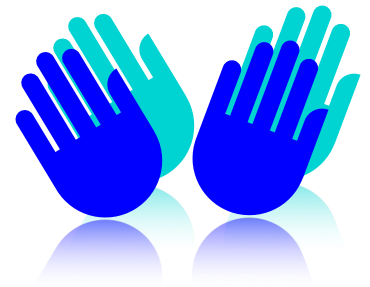




2. SPECIAL EVENTS

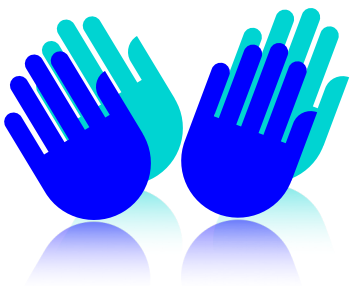
- Estimated earned: \$15,000
 - This estimate is due to last year's income from fundraising special events was one \$13,000, and we think this is a healthy and very attainable goal in order to gain more money from events of this nature (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati Form 990, 2021).
- We will create a unique theatre driven event that gives our audience a fun and inviting experience that promotes our organization, while fostering an environment of generosity and giving. This will require lots of planning along with informing the community in order to create excitement surrounding the event.
- This will focus on the generous and devoted people in our community, as well as those who are interested in philanthropic events, and exclusive theatre experiences.
- This event should take place during a time in which people are willing to give but also during a time of the year where our theater season is not incredibly active so we aren't competing with ourselves. We think an event like this would be wonderful to do towards the end of the season as a way to celebrate what has been accomplished throughout the year, while encouraging donations to have an even better next season.
- This will require a large amount of time from staff in terms of planning and marketing, as well as board members making appearances and inviting important people. Volunteers could also be used strategically in order to give community members the opportunity to give to the event using their time.





3. GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN

- Estimated earned: \$5,000
 - This is a new concept for our theatre as it is not typical for us to participate in Giving Tuesday. That being said, we have a very generous community, and donors, so we feel that \$5,000 is a very attainable goal for this kind of fundraiser, and could easily be surpassed.
- In order to do this, we need to decide how we will spread the word about this campaign, as well as if it will go to a specific program within our organization. It will also be important to put it on all of our social media platforms, and email lists.
- Our target audience is those in the community or patrons who are looking for a good cause to give to on Giving Tuesday.
- We will need to have this campaign up and ready before Giving Tuesday, so that we have the opportunity to spread the word about it in advance due to it being a new concept for our organization.
- Those responsible for this task within our organization are our marketing team, and also every employee in the organization should be spreading awareness about the fundraiser and encouraging their friends and family to support our cause.





4. GRANTS

- Estimated earned: \$1,800,000
 - The amount of grants we received from government and outside sources last year was around \$1,500,000, so naturally we think this would be a realistic and possible increase when looking at larger grants (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati Form 990, 2021).
- While we already have many grants that we apply for and receive yearly, we want to add applying for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): Theater Grant. The amount is not listed, however we hope that we would be able to earn a \$300,000 grant from them in order to better serve our community. We will do this by having administrative staff write a very detailed grant proposal and submit it to the NEA for review.
- Our target audience for this grant is the review panel for the National Endowment for the Arts who will be looking at our grant application with great detail.
- We must be very particular about following the deadlines for this grant application in order to stay on track as it must be submitted at the start of the year (Grants for arts projects: Theater, n.d.).
- We will utilize administrative staff who are skilled in grant writing, and make it their responsibility to submit and review all of the grants policies.





5. MONTHLY DONORS

- Estimated earned: \$84,000
 - We have a history of many donors being consistent in their generosity, and so with that if 700 people make a \$10 monthly donation to the organization, \$7,000 dollars would be very likely. For the whole year that would equate to around \$84,000 in donations, which based on past years would be a attainable, but beneficial goal increase (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati Form 990, 2021).
- This will simply be done by reaching out to people in email or phone call form and asking if they would be willing to increase their one-time donation into a monthly donation, in order to create that retention. We will also speak to our audiences about giving opportunities at the beginning of performances.
- Our target audience for monthly donations would be one-time donors who we feel are ready to become monthly donors.
- We will put a large focus on this in the beginning of our season, so that we can talk to patrons at performances and build those connections with them, so they feel more comfortable making that jump. We also want to know if we have their donations to depend on throughout the rest of our fiscal year.
- The staff that will help in this effort will be fundraising staff, as they are the ones who need to make these connections with patrons, in order to make them feel appreciated.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati strives to make this next year better than the last, in order to continue serving our community. We strive to grow and develop new skills, and strategies to make that a reality for the years to come. We will look back at this development plan throughout the year to remind us of our foundational goals, and in order to keep us on track. We look forward to working together as a team to continue to make this plan a reality for the Cincinnati community, and beyond.

CITATIONS

WEBSITES/DOCUMENTS

Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati. (n.d.). *About us | Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati*. Ensemblecincy. <https://ensemblecincinnati.org/about/>

Learn & Engage | Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati. (n.d.). Ensemblecincy. <https://ensemblecincinnati.org/learn-and-engage/#impact>

AFTA: Arts + Art Fact Sheet - Ww2.Americansforthearts.Org, ww2.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/AFTA%20fact_Arts%2BArt_ADA.pdf. Accessed 8 Dec. 2023.

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Luttrull, E. G. (2013). Chapter 9: Cash Challenges. In *Arts & numbers: A financial guide for artists, writers, performers, and other members of the creative class* (pp. 105–113). essay, B2 Books.

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IMAGES

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