

BRIC

Manifesto + Strategic Plan

2020–2023





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LETTER FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

PHOTO: STEVE DE SÈVE



When I took the helm of BRIC in September 2018, I stepped into an organization with forty years of history and a commitment to cultural programming in Brooklyn and beyond. And yet, there were a number of perspectives on and questions around the audiences we served and our focus. Since then, we undertook an ambitious human-centered process in pursuit

of clarity of purpose. That process led us to a rearticulated mission, informed by our impact and legacy, and a newly articulated vision statement, guided by aspirational institutional goals. We also developed strategies for achieving those goals, and an approach to deploy the resources and staff required to bring those strategies to life.

With the input of our Board, our staff, funders, partners, community producers, and artists, we are ready to shout it from the rooftops. This strategic plan will chart a path and lead our way for the next four years and we are thrilled to share it with you. In our 41st year, we're committed to building Brooklyn's Creative Future. Will you join us?

One love,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "KRISTINA Newman-Scott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kristina Newman-Scott

This manifesto and plan will allow us to be stronger together—to know and be one BRIC.



LETTER FROM THE **BOARD CHAIR**

PHOTO: LINDA BUSETTI



We're thrilled to present BRIC's Manifesto and Strategic Plan. Initiated by the staff, it represents months of collaboration, preparation, and attention to detail between the board, staff, and wide range of creators, supporters, and audience members that help BRIC build Brooklyn's creative future everyday.

The process of developing this document has made our role in the cultural landscape more clear. This plan refines our mission and, for the first time in our forty-year history, states BRIC's vision and institutional values while outlining goals and strategies to deliver against them.

We're inspired by what comes next. And, we have a plan. It's energizing and ambitious, and we look forward to accomplishing it with you.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Liburd

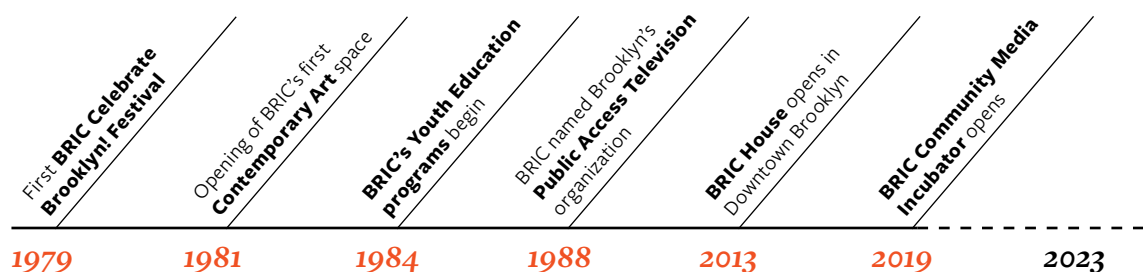


INTRODUCTION

Brooklyn. Millions of brilliant voices ready to be heard. Vibrant neighborhoods fueled by art that reflects our collective experience. Dynamic communities built around shared stories.

For forty years, BRIC has been giving Brooklyn a platform and a gathering place: from launching the BRIC Celebrate Brooklyn! Festival in Prospect Park, to establishing one of Brooklyn's first contemporary art galleries. From cultivating art and media literacy in our public schools and creating the nation's leading community media center, to building a multi-disciplinary cultural hub where all people belong.

Now, with a larger physical and digital footprint, **we are clarifying our vision to better serve our borough and beyond.**



The Process

In the summer and fall of 2019, BRIC engaged hundreds of stakeholders in a human-centered, iterative, and evidence-based process to articulate a new manifesto and Strategic Plan for the next four years.

KEY THEMES WE HEARD

Artists and media makers at all stages want more resources and pathways

BRIC should create more and deeper partnerships

More people need to know BRIC

People want to feel more welcomed and have more access

BRIC should take explicit steps towards equity and inclusion, especially in curation and decision-making

BRIC should own its strength and position with "swagger"



BRIC Manifesto

*Our vision,
mission,
and values*



Vision

OUR VISION FOR BROOKLYN

We envision a Brooklyn where **all people** have **meaningful connections** to artistic experiences, the **tools and opportunity** to express their creative potential, and the **power** to transform their world.



Mission

WHAT WE DO + WHY

BRIC builds Brooklyn's creative future.

We **ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY**
for visual artists, performers, and
media makers.

We **PRESENT BOLD WORK**
that reflects diverse audiences
and speaks to the world.

We **IGNITE LEARNING** in
people of all ages.

We **UNITE BROOKLYN** through
art and creativity to build
community and make change.

Values

OUR BEHAVIORAL COMPASS

Rooted in **Brooklyn**, and reaching out to the world, BRIC is guided by our commitment to **creative risk-taking** and a definition of **excellence** that values creators and communities that are under-recognized in the cultural sector. We operate with **integrity, inclusivity**, and a commitment to **equity**. We listen and respond to our communities, ensure that our spaces allow all people to feel welcome and free, and support people with the unique resources they need to thrive.



PHOTO: DAVID ANDRAKO



BRIC Strategic Plan

*Our most important work
between now and 2023*

Over the next four years, we will prioritize the following goals and strategies to enact our vision, mission, and values.

GOAL

Deepen service to creators, participants, and audiences by capitalizing on BRIC's unique synergy of visual, media, and performing arts

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Increase cross-departmental and cross-functional collaboration and communication
- ▶ Employ a unified program planning and evaluation methodology to identify programs to start, grow, or sunset
- ▶ Increase our capacity to be responsive to shifts in artistic and consumer practices, especially around technology

GOAL

Articulate clear pathways of development for people of all ages and levels of creative experience

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Identify, prioritize, and address gaps in pathways of development through investment in incubation, presentation, and professional development opportunities
- ▶ Create intentional opportunities for mentorship and networking across disciplines

GOAL

Pursue equity and build a culture of accountability in program structures and internal operations

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Continue to develop diverse curatorial voices to ensure relevance and excellence
- ▶ Increase investment in creators through equitable pay and commissions
- ▶ Develop and implement staff compensation strategy
- ▶ Develop and implement diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan
- ▶ Develop and implement accountability and decision-making rubric

GOAL

Build a strong BRIC brand

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Create a brand architecture that allows BRIC to effectively communicate all facets of our work across all platforms and strengthen our position in the landscape
- ▶ Develop a unique brand identity that is expressed through a robust marketing and communications campaign across digital and traditional media
- ▶ Implement a comprehensive audience development and engagement plan
- ▶ Elevate our national media profile among key constituents: creators, audiences, existing and new funders, etc.

GOAL

Make BRIC easier to understand, access, and navigate

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Identify, prioritize, and address barriers to participation
- ▶ Create visitor services, communication, and fundraising tools that prioritize the user experience
- ▶ Address visibility, accessibility, functionality, and identity of physical spaces, in particular BRIC House

GOAL

Maximize revenue to ensure BRIC's future

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Maximize and prioritize unrestricted revenue to support BRIC mission and institutional priorities
- ▶ Support the successful renegotiation of cable contracts and protect the value of Public Access media
- ▶ Further diversify revenue to create sustainable media programs
- ▶ Create more opportunities for Board investment and involvement

GOAL

Articulate clear business models for BRIC programs

STRATEGIES

- ▶ Develop an insights and analytics practice that enables us to better understand the marketplace and trends at the local and national level
- ▶ Undertake cost-benefit analysis to support programmatic decision-making
- ▶ Implement programmatic and operational structures based on research and analysis



BRIC Methodologies

*How we bring our vision,
mission, and values to life*





How we
educate: LEARN

BRIC ignites learning for youth, adults, and intergenerational groups through education programs that are built on the belief that every individual has unique creative potential. We create educational activities that are participant-centric, hands-on, outcome-oriented, project-based, accessible, and culturally responsive. Created in collaboration with diverse individuals and educators, public schools, colleges, universities, and governmental and non-profit organizations, we privilege long-term relationships and community-building. BRIC LEARN programs result in confident, life-long learners that possess art and media literacy; material, technological, and practical skills that are useful in work and life; and the means to create from their own voice.

How we
incubate: LAB

BRIC nurtures artists, media makers, creative individuals, and other non-profit organizations throughout the lifecycle of their creative journey with responsive opportunities and investments of time, space, financial, and human resources. We work with diverse creatives who are asking important questions, open to having a conversation about their work and process, and positioned to take full advantage of BRIC's support. LAB programs use a planning, work, and reflection cycle that builds and sustains relationships beyond transactional engagement and include networking and cross-disciplinary exchange. Opportunities are open, and curation and feedback processes involve a diverse mix of internal and external experts. The support of BRIC LAB leads to engaged, inspired creators who make leaps in their practice and drive culture forward.

How we
curate + present: *LIVE*

BRIC presents original work of creators that are committed, boundary-pushing, socially and politically engaged, open to dialogue, and sincere. We cultivate diverse audiences and value their role in the interactive moments of presentation. We utilize multiple platforms, and embrace a spectrum from uncurated to rigorously curated content. We value the vision of our curatorial leaders, as well as partners and contributors who bring new or particular knowledge. In our curatorial processes, we consider the historical and present context for a creator's work, as well as voice, form, content, subject matter, genre, technical skill, and the artists' connection with audience and community. We find resonance in stories that share common themes or speak to each other across difference. Presentations speak to the dynamism of Brooklyn; we seek diversity across race, ethnicity, cultural perspective, class, gender, sexuality, age, and ability, and intentionally make space for experiences and points of view that are underrepresented in the arts and media landscapes. BRIC LIVE programs are joyful and provocative, and inspire discovery, conversation, and connection.



How we

partner + engage community

BRIC builds mutually beneficial relationships through partnership and community engagement. We partner with individuals and groups, non-profit organizations, corporations, schools, and governmental agencies to meet our mission, expand our reach, widen our perspective, share expertise, and strengthen the networks of which we are a part. We recognize the importance of place and commit to understanding the unique context, histories, and needs of neighborhoods in which we work. We acknowledge the resources, position, and power dynamics between partners, and the time and human capacity it takes to build trust. We prioritize long-term relationships that grow and evolve, supported by clear and open communication. Partnerships happen at the right time and place to have the most impact, with shared clarity around the desired end. Through partnership and community engagement we increase our impact and strengthen our communities.

How we

support our work

BRIC builds a strong base of support for our work through diverse contributed and earned income streams, from individuals, foundations, government agencies, and corporations. This support enables us to fulfill our mission and extend our impact. We engage stakeholders from across a wide variety of sectors who have influence and a stake in the communities we serve. We create multiple points of entry for donors at all levels to invest in BRIC and steward long-term, authentic relationships to ensure their ongoing support. We are responsive to social and economic trends that inform giving and engage in thought-leadership with our philanthropic partners for the betterment of our sector and communities. BRIC's Board of Directors, in collaboration with the executive office, leads our fundraising and revenue strategy to ensure the fiscal health and sustainability of BRIC.

How we **tell our story**

BRIC uses its marketing and communication channels to be in dialogue with our audiences and communities. Our voice is clear, warm, inclusive, joyful, and inspiring and is based in authentic connection with—and deep understanding of—the communities we engage. We elevate diverse voices of artists, media makers, students, program participants, local community leaders, and Brooklynites who have a story to tell. We reach people where they are and ensure that our messages resonate with diverse audiences. As a result of BRIC’s marketing and communications, we build trust; bring more people into contact with the work of creators; add value to our partnerships; build BRIC’s brand locally, nationally, and globally; and inspire people to act.

How we **use our space**

BRIC shows up in a variety of spaces and neighborhoods throughout the borough—in libraries, schools, community centers, partner venues, public spaces, Prospect Park, and notably at BRIC House and the new BRIC Community Media Incubator in Fort Greene/Downtown Brooklyn. In all of our spaces we want all people to feel welcomed, respected, engaged, and connected. Our staff is committed to meeting people where they are and using their expertise to be the ground upon which others can take creative risks and reach their highest potential. We manage our facilities and equipment fairly and take seriously the responsibility to ensure the safety of people in our spaces. We use our space to make environments where art and community come together for transformative experiences.



Thank you to everyone who contributed time, energy, and knowledge to the creation of this manifesto and plan: BRIC's passionate and committed Board of Directors, Advisory Councils, and Staff, as well as our communities of artists, media makers, community producers, educators, students, community partners, cultural workers, and neighbors.

Design + Strategy Partner



MACHINE Brooklyn, NY

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Special thanks to Lead BRIC Supporters

NYC Cultural Affairs



National Endowment for the Arts
nea.gov



Council on the Arts



LAMBENT
FOUNDATION





PHOTO: TOBY TENENBAUM

BRIC builds *Brooklyn's* creative future with the generous support of thousands of individuals, foundations, and corporate and government partners.

Join us.

ARTWORK BY SCHEREZADE GARCIA, PHOTO COURTESY THE ARTIST



BRIC

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