

Boise, Idaho

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Steve Allred, Chair
 Diana Livingston-Friedley, Vice Chair
 Marsha Bjornn
 Derek Dean
 Marshall Garrett
 Lynette Hale
 Sheila Hennessey
 Julia Oxarango-Ingram
 Adrian San Miguel
 LaVerne Sessions
 Blair Williams
 Dyno Wahl, At-Large

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Jared Johnson

STAFF PRESENT

Laura Curry, Executive Director
 Jocelyn Robertson, Deputy Director
 Jadee Carson, Chief Operating Officer
 Steven Hatcher, Folk and Traditional Arts Director
 Rebecca Martin, Arts Education Director
 John McMahon, Operations Analyst

STAFF ABSENT

None

GUESTS

Abigail, Agnew Beck
 Ellen Campfield Nelson, Agnew Beck
 Joe Haege, Executive Director, Idaho Film Society

PUBLIC PRESENT

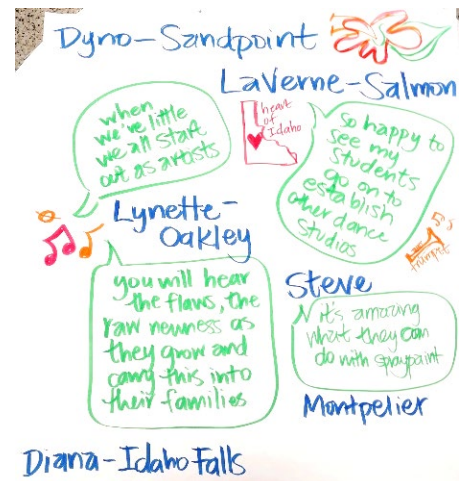
None

DAY 1 – February 27, 2025

Welcome & Table Setting

Get to Know Each Other – sharing art that matters to us

- **Dyno Wahl** (*Sandpoint*): Brought fiber arts, weaving piece. "It's not the finished product – it's the joy of creating that's fun." Also brought Hawaiian art book – it would be amazing to make private artwork available to the public.
- **LaVerne Sessions** (*Salmon*): Brought a former student, Gideon Tolman, because I started a dance studio and I love working with the youth.
- **Lynette Hale** (*Oakley*): Shared video of a Fusion of Sound performance of 7-12th graders.
- **Steve Allred** (*Montpelier*): Shared two spray paint art pieces created by his son, who taught himself the art form after being inspired by a street artist.
- **Diana Livingston Friedley** (*Pocatello*): "Music is what inspires me every day – this is a hymn to music."



- **Marsha Bjornn** (Rexburg): Sculpture casting of a statue at her hospital.
- **Blair Williams** (Coeur d'Alene): "I make a beautiful spreadsheet – they are equally important to the arts."
- **Marshall Garrett** (Boise): "I've come to love jazz because of the tremendous respect that must exist to play it successfully. The kids talked about the responsibility of being a citizen and a jazz player." Played the song Caravan.
- **Adrian San Miguel** (Meridian): Art sculpture from New Mexico given as a gift, reminder of service.
- **Sheila Hennessey** (Boise): Performed a monologue from a play by Idahoan playwright, Sam Hunter. "You come out of the end of the plays with a glimmer of hope."
- **Julia Oxarango-Ingram** (Boise): Think about communities through the arts. "It just takes a little spark somewhere."
- **Derek Dean** (Hailey): Emphasized the importance of supporting artists while they are alive. Played an excerpt "Within her Arms" which is an ode to the composer's mother.



Observations after the share-out:

- "I feel honored to be at the table with all of you."
- "This Commission is so representative of the various geographies and art mediums in Idaho."
- "I loved seeing what everyone brought to the table – we gained appreciation for one another."

Organizational Visioning

Mission/Vision Ideation Exercise

Priorities expressed during this exercise:

- The group liked the concise language used in Patagonia's Vi-Mission Statement: "We're in business to save our planet."
- It's important to emphasize cultural heritage, economic impact and inclusivity. "All" resonated with many as a good word to capture inclusivity.
- A short, catchy statement that combines mission/vision is ideal.



draft VISION statements:

- We envision a Gem State alive with creativity, where a collaborative arts network unites communities, fuels the economy, and connects Idahoans to their vibrant cultural heritage.
- We envision an Idaho brimming with creativity, where a collaborative arts network unites communities, fuels the economy, and connects Idahoans to their rich cultural heritage.
- We envision a vibrant, connected Idaho alive with creativity, where art and culture touch every Idahoan's daily life.
- We envision a vibrant Gem State where creativity thrives, our cultural heritage is celebrated, and arts and culture touch every Idahoan's daily life.
- We envision a vibrant statewide arts network that unites and strengthens Idaho communities, celebrates cultural heritage, and fuels creativity, artistic expression, and economic impact—enriching every Idahoan's life.



draft MISSION statements:

- We strengthen Idaho communities by cultivating a vibrant statewide arts network, uniting stakeholders, empowering artists, and making investments to support creativity and collaboration.
- We invest in Idaho communities by cultivating a vibrant, collaborative arts network that empowers artists and organizations through gatherings and capacity-building initiatives.
- We foster appreciation for the arts through collaboration, stewardship, and support, empowering artists to create a vibrant, inclusive community.
- We invest in Idaho communities by fostering a vibrant, collaborative, and creative arts network to support artists and organizations through gatherings and capacity-building initiatives.
- We ignite creativity and connection, uniting Idaho's arts champions to inspire, support, and strengthen communities through collaboration, grants, and shared vision.
- We strengthen communities by fostering a diverse network of arts champions, uniting stakeholders for collaboration and creative visioning, supporting artists and organizations through gatherings, grants, and technical assistance, and building capacity to sustain arts jobs and businesses.
- Arts Idaho champions appreciation for the arts through collaborative and respectful teamwork. As knowledgeable and effective stewards, we support and encourage artists to build a vibrant, inclusive creative community.

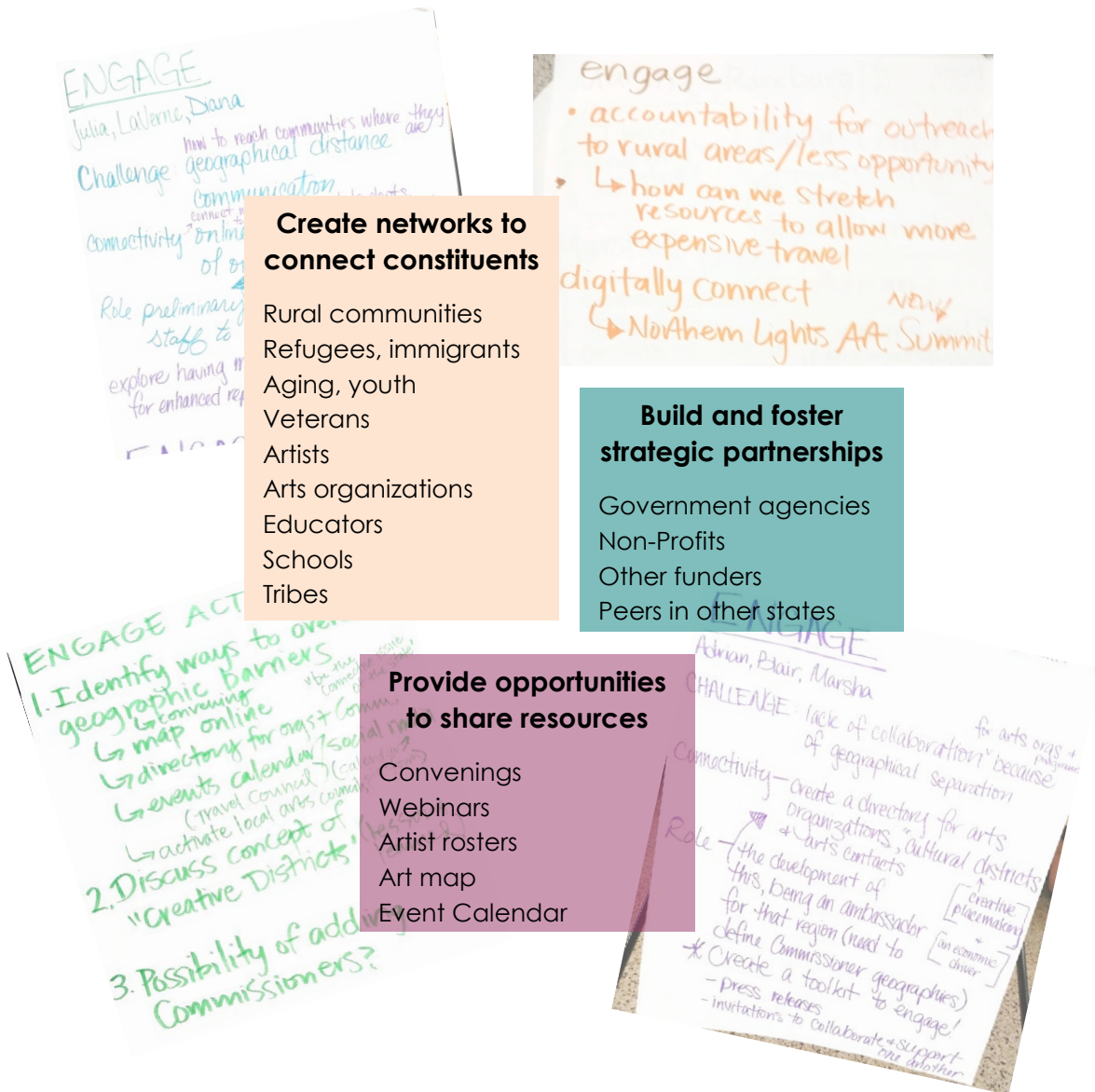


draft combined **VISION/MISSION** statements:

- We invest in a Gem State alive with creativity, where a vibrant arts network unites communities, ignites the economy, and empowers artists, connecting all Idahoans to their rich cultural heritage.
- We envision a vibrant, connected Idaho alive with creativity, where art and culture enrich daily life, and where Arts Idaho unites arts champions to support and strengthen communities through collaboration, investments, and shared vision.
- We invest in the Gem State's economy by weaving a vibrant arts network that unites communities, empowers artists, and connects all Idahoans to their rich artistic and cultural heritage.
- We invest in a Gem State bursting with creativity, where a thriving arts network weaves communities together, ignites the economy, empowers artists, and threads all Idahoans into the fabric of their rich cultural heritage.
- We invest in our vision of a Gem State alive with creativity by cultivating a vibrant statewide arts network, uniting stakeholders, empowering artists, and making investments to support creativity and collaboration.
- We invest in a Gem State alive with creativity by weaving a vibrant arts network that unites communities, empowers artists, and fuels the economy.
- We weave a thriving arts network into the fabric of Idaho's economy, uniting communities, empowering artists, and connecting all Idahoans to their rich artistic and cultural heritage.

Strategic Framework

ENGAGE: We connect people and resources



Strategic Framework

ENGAGE: We connect people and resources

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Idaho artists and arts organizations want to connect with each other to share resources and best practices; how can we facilitate that statewide connection?
- We have a duty to include the entire state in our work. What could Arts Idaho do to be more collaborative and effective in rural areas?
- Strategic Partnerships could expand our reach and raise our agency's profile.

CHALLENGES AND QUESTIONS

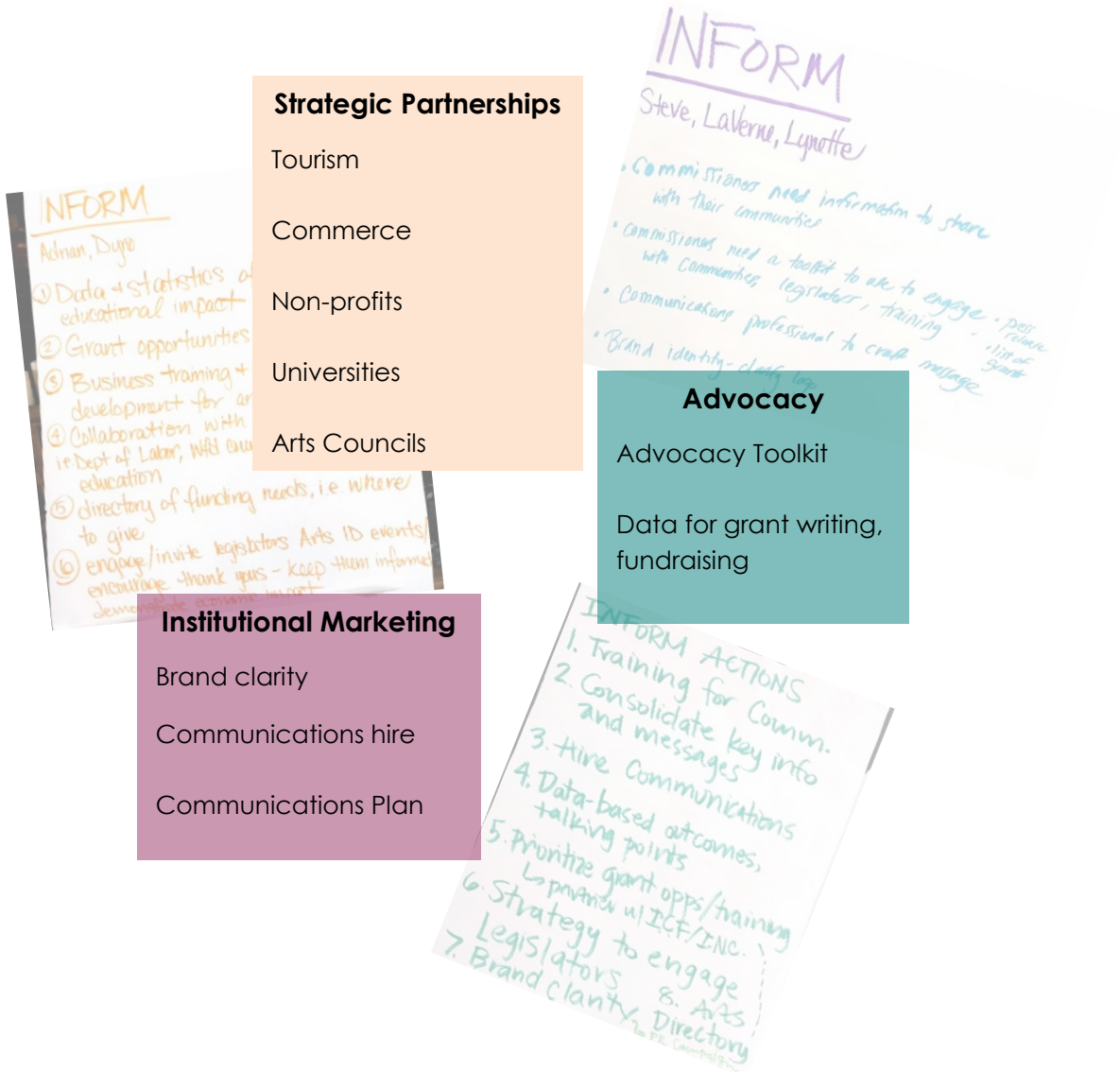
- The biggest challenge to statewide engagement is Idaho's geography.
- How can we be more informed about what's happening with the arts across the state so that we can support, encourage and promote that work?
- We are a small agency. How does a staff of eight or ten people connect with the entire state?
- What role do Commissioners play in engagement? Could we have a larger number of Commissioners to enhance representation across the state?
- Creative Districts could be an effective tool for engagement if executed well. How could we participate in this work in a way that makes sense for the size and scope of our agency?

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- **Convenings:** Help facilitate small regional gatherings. Host an annual arts convening that rotates geographically (north, central, south, east). Digital convenings are cost-effective and allow access for those in remote parts of the state: provide webinars on relevant topics.
- **Map:** build and host an online arts map to help people connect with artists and organizations in their areas.
- **Directory:** Create and maintain a directory or roster for artists, arts educators and arts organizations.
- **Calendar:** Find a platform to host a statewide arts event calendar.
- **Arts Councils:** Strengthen and foster relationships with regional arts councils to extend our reach and help connect people and organizations statewide.
- **Creative Districts:** Reexamine the Creative District program and Creative Placemaking to see if there is a way to engage in this work by leveraging partnerships
- **Partnerships:** Identify other agencies and organizations with similar goals, build partnerships with them to advance our priorities.

Strategic Framework

INFORM: We gather and share knowledge



Strategic Framework

INFORM: We gather and share knowledge

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Organizations need data for grant writing, fundraising and advocacy. Many appreciated it when the Commission used to share resources they could use to thank their legislators for grants in their communities, and they would like it if we could provide these resources again.
- There has not been a priority in our strategic plan related to communications or advocacy for many years. Our agency has operated under the belief that it was best to “fly under the radar.”
- Many people don't know what we do, and there is confusion about our name. Commissioners from each region reported that stakeholders are unaware that Arts Idaho is the Idaho Commission on the Arts. Legislators may be in the dark about the good work we are doing simply because of a lack of branding clarity and our low marketing profile. These factors could be contributing to our funding gap. “I would be glad to give up some grant money to pay for a marketing campaign for the Commission.”
- Consistency in messaging around arts advocacy across the state is important. We can provide that consistent voice.
- Our website and grant platform need to be accessible, informative, and intuitive to use.

CHALLENGES AND QUESTIONS

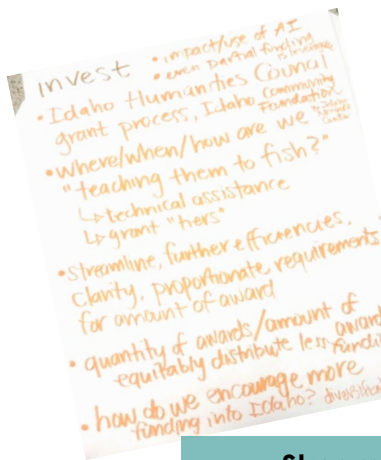
- Arts organizations and legislators should see our agency as an informed resource. How can we evolve the commission to be the resource hub that shares Idaho arts data?
- Should marketing = advocacy?

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- **COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:** Hire Communications staff to create and execute comprehensive Communications Plan that incorporates all programming and has messaging relevant to all stakeholders (grantees, legislators, community members, Commissioners.)
- **PARTNERSHIPS:** Identify strategic partners to help gather and share data (Tourism, Commerce, non-profits, arts councils, universities...)
- **BRANDING:** Develop brand clarity - could add “Idaho Commission on the Arts” beneath any Arts Idaho logos and branding.
- **TRAINING:** Make asynchronous trainings available on the Arts website.
- **ADVOCACY TOOLKIT:** Create advocacy toolkit for Commissioners and grant recipients. Offer communications training, i.e. easy talking points and data-based outcomes. Focus on the economic impact of the arts and incorporate meaningful regional stories.

Strategic Framework

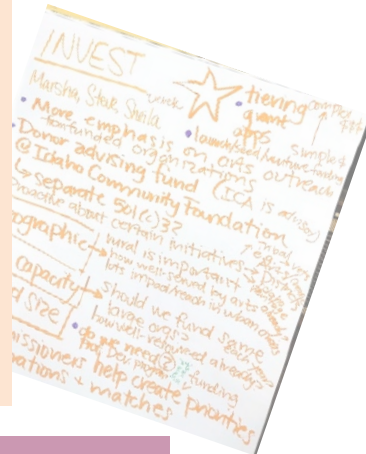
INVEST: We provide resources to build capacity



Refine existing programs to meet priorities expressed by constituents

Professional Development

Self-sufficiency and capacity building



Streamline Grantmaking

Grant Committee

North Star

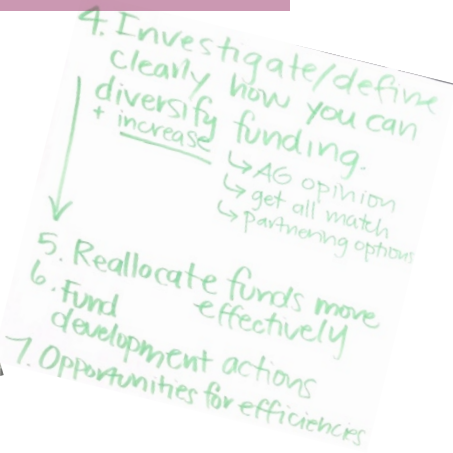
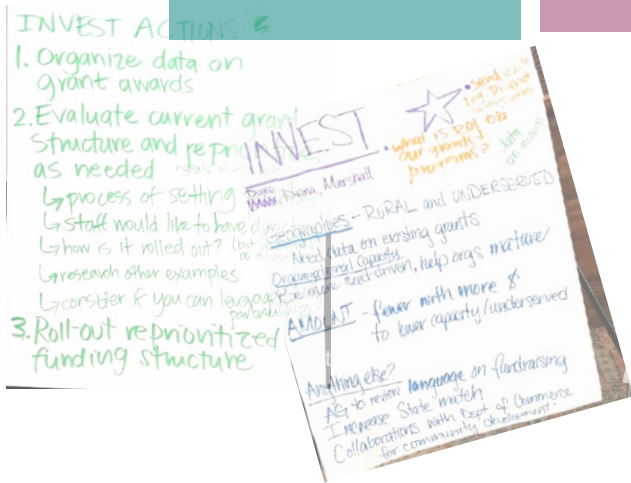
Funding amounts

Application process

Investigate Diversification of Funding Streams

Attorney General opinion

Leverage strategic funding partnerships



Strategic Framework

INVEST: We provide resources to build capacity

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- In light of the current funding environment, there is a need to investigate the possibility of diversifying organizational funding streams.
- For years, the agency has operated under an unspoken funding philosophy: give everyone a little bit of the pie. As grant requests have increased and funding has failed to keep pace, this philosophy has led to diminished impact in our grant program.
- There is a desire from staff to have clear priorities for providing grant awards. The Commission needs to define these priorities so staff can move forward accordingly. We need a North Star for our grantmaking: top-down priorities that inform decisions about grant awards. Do we prioritize rural areas? Or financial need? Or do we want to award grants based on focus areas or merit?
- Our grant processes need to be streamlined to allow for greater transparency, access and efficiency.
- A grant from the Commission is seen as a seal of approval, opening doors to other funding opportunities.

CHALLENGES AND QUESTIONS

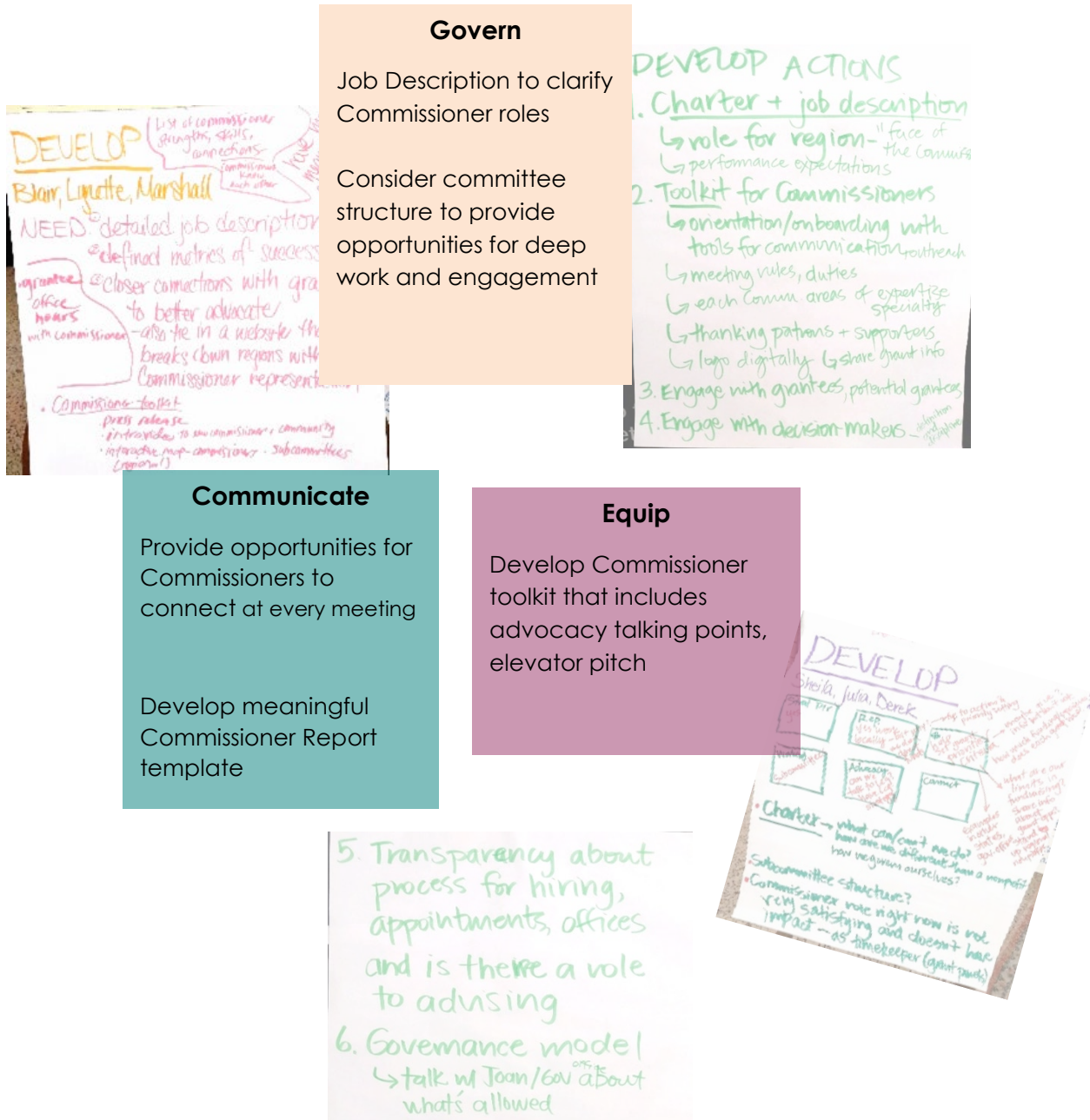
- How do we more equitably distribute funds?
- What is the guiding philosophy for our investments?
- What is the role of the Commission in connecting and leveraging more funds for the Arts Idaho?
- How do we increase our revenue to keep up with a rising demand for grants?
- Are there partnerships we can leverage for funding?

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- **GET THE FACTS:** Get updated opinion from the Attorney General's Office about our ability to fundraise/diversify funding streams.
- **EMPOWERMENT:** Focus on more programs like My Artpreneur that "Teach a Man to Fish." Offer workshops on grant writing, fundraising and planned giving.
- **STREAMLINE GRANTS:** Empower staff to research and report on ways to streamline our grant process. Constitute a Grant Committee to review options and make recommendations to the Commission. Things for the committee to consider: a guiding philosophy for investments, grant award amounts, priorities for grantmaking, ease of application, peer organizations
- **REALLOCATE FUNDS:** Examine programs that were not high priorities for strategic plan survey respondents (Professional Development – ie: Change Leader). Are those dollars well spent, or could we optimize and potentially reallocate those organizational funds?

Strategic Framework

EVOLVE: We adapt to stay relevant



Strategic Framework

EVOLVE: We adapt to stay relevant

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Commissioners want clarity about what it means to be “the face of the Commission,” seeking direction and role definition so that they can be effective representatives in their regions.
- There is a desire for transparency about processes and procedures like appointments and hirings.
- Commissioner reports are often laundry lists of local events rather than documentation of meaningful interactions with grant recipients, community leaders, legislators and other stakeholders.
- Commissioners bring a wide variety of talents and networks to the Commission. It's important that Commissioners know each other so they can tap into the resources offered by the group.

CHALLENGES AND QUESTIONS

- In the absence of bylaws, what sort of governance structure can the Commission put in place that will provide clarity and transparency?
- What role do Commissioners play in advocacy?
- What role can Commissioners play in the identification and appointment of fellow Commissioners and Commission leadership?

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- **GOVERNANCE:** Develop a charter and job description for the Commission including role definition, regional responsibilities, and performance expectations.
- **TOOLKIT:** Develop a Commissioner Toolkit including orientation / onboarding materials; tools for communications and outreach; current talking points and data, elevator pitch, etiquette.
- **REPORT:** Develop a Commissioner Report template that generates helpful insights into community challenges, successes, and opportunities for support from the Commission.
- **COMMITTEES:** Explore the possibility of working committees to foster Commissioner engagement and provide opportunities for deeper examination and work on targeted focus areas.
- **CONNECTION:** Build opportunities for connection into each Commission gathering to grow relationships and a sense of unity amongst Commissioners.