



Strategic Plan

December 5, 2024

Legal Info

Legal Name:	The Gladstone Theatre Inc.
Address:	910 Gladstone Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1R 6Y4
Corporate Status:	Not-for-profit corporation under Canada Not-for-profit Corporation Act
Corporation Number:	997708-2
Date of Incorporation:	November 16, 2016 (prior to this, unincorporated collective of indie theatres, 2011—2016)
Charitable Status:	Registered Charitable Organization #743590895 RR 0001

ABOUT US

Description:	The Gladstone Theatre (TGT) provides a unique and inclusive space for independent local theatre companies - <i>any theatre organisation, company, collective or group that lacks access to stable resources such as operating funding, a regular venue of their own, and full-time staff</i> - to create theatre which welcomes and supports our city's diversity.
Mission:	To operate a recognized, sustainable, and affordable facility for Ottawa's independent theatre companies where shared services, programming and opportunities for artistic development, and professional work, can be coordinated, realised, and presented to local audiences. TGT will strive to be a well funded, well staffed and well governed venue, expanding audience size and diversity through the offer of a range of services to the community: apprenticeships and learning opportunities for youth; whimsical, quirky productions and variety; artistic and creative incubation for small groups; mentorship opportunities expanding to high schools.
Vision:	TGT will: ➤ Be an Ottawa-oriented theatre organisation dedicated to supporting and showcasing local artists and organisations, entertaining local audiences, and contributing to Ottawa's theatre ecosystem through a variety of other activities ➤ Be the "go-to" venue for people looking to produce or engage with independent theatre at an affordable rate ➤ See programming extend beyond theatre to provide a variety of live entertainment ➤ Support a welcoming, open, and inclusive community environment with diverse representation both on stage and off

- Act as an incubator for smaller independent theatre groups or individual artists and offer valuable mentorship or internship opportunities, artistic residencies, and other programming support for members of Ottawa’s arts ecosystem
- Engage with post-secondary students, recent graduates, and emerging artists to help encourage the next generation of local artists and arts workers
- Support the DIY spirit of its renters and offer a variety of ways of working to best meet artist and audience needs
- Operate with eco-respectful practices

Values:

Welcoming All: Inclusivity—Diversity—Safety—Outreach—Visibility

Artistic Integrity: Artistic Expression—Empowering Local Artists—”Indie” Arts—seasons curated by the artists

Organisational Integrity: Sustainability—Stability—Good Governance

Be Respectful and Respected: Accountability—Transparency

Safety Commitment: TGT is committed to providing a caring, healthy and safe environment for its employees, volunteers and associates, together with outstanding service and quality theatrical entertainment for its patrons.

Target Demographic:

Ottawa and area patrons of live performance events

Growth targets: youth and members of equity-deserving communities

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Financial information from most recent audited financial statements (fiscal year ended June 30, 2023)

AT A GLANCE

Net Assets:	\$ 63,759	
Revenues & Expenses	Including Pass-Through B.O. *	Excluding Pass-Through B.O. *
Annual Revenue:	\$ 1,050,785	\$ 495,129
Annual Expenses:	\$ 1,007,304	\$ 451,904

DETAILED SUMMARY

	Amount	% of Budget	% of Budget
		<i>Incl. Pass-Through B.O. *</i>	<i>Excl. Pass-Through B.O. *</i>
Revenues			
Earned Revenue			
Box office sales	\$ 555,656	53%	n/a
Rent, bar, facility fees	\$ 193,741	18%	39%
Sub-total, earned rev.	\$ 749,397	71%	39%
Grants	\$ 277,353	27%	56%
Donations	<u>\$ 24,035</u>	<u>2%</u>	<u>5%</u>
Total Revenue	\$ 1,050,785	100%	100%
Expenses			
Box office sales	\$ 555,400	55%	n/a
Facility	\$ 191,114	19%	42%
Salaries and wages	\$ 102,631	10%	23%
Professional fees	\$ 48,012	11%	
Administrative	\$ 45,724	10%	
Other	<u>\$ 64,423</u>	<u>6%</u>	<u>14%</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 1,007,304	100%	100%

* TGT's audited statements include box office revenues collected by TGT on behalf of producers presenting shows in its venue, which are subsequently passed on 100% to those producers. These revenues account for a large portion of overall revenues and expenses. Figures including these pass-through box office revenues reflect the full activity of TGT. Figures excluding these revenues reflect the revenues and expenses that are specific to TGT's own activities.

OUR INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

Category	Board and Committee Members	Staff and Front of House Volunteers	Resident Companies
Why do they believe in us?	They know we're dedicated to the Gladstone project and they want the TGT's vision to become reality.	They know the potential TGT has and they understand we're doing our best to achieve that potential.	TGT is the best solution for the viability of small theatre companies and they value the stability and continuity of TGT.
What do we need them for?	Leadership, guidance and the drive to get the vision realised.	They are the face of The Gladstone. They are who the audience meets at the front door. They look after the day-to-day operations of the theatre and make TGT's activities possible.	They provide stability, continuity, and commitment to renting the theatre. They volunteer hours of work to further the needs of TGT by serving on the board and on committees.
Why do we believe in them?	They're selfless people who know that the community needs TGT and that the TGT has a whole lot to contribute to the community.	They're dedicated to The Gladstone project and have shown their loyalty over and over.	They're tried and true. From 2016 on, resident companies have been steadfast, trusted partners and stakeholders with TGT.

Our External Stakeholders

Category	Artists, Performers, Producers	Patrons, Donors and Funders	Audience and Community
Why do they believe in us?	They've seen how since 2016 TGT has improved and expanded its services to them.	We provide a variety of shows from local theatres and artists that appeal to diverse audiences. Our transparency demonstrates that their support goes directly to supporting the Arts. They believe in the importance of our facility to the local arts community.	They believe we are striving to continue the rich legacy of the performing arts in the city and adding to the culture of our community. Local community (eg. BIA) see the value that TGT brings to the mainstreet here.
What do we need them for?	They're our raison-d'être. We need them to fulfil our mission.	We rely on and appreciate their financial support and their presence at the shows. They spread the	We need them to attend our shows, support TGT, the local artists and performers, and help promote us to

		word to their friends, families and social networks.	their friends and the community. We also need partners, like the local BIA, to help promote TGT and the area. Plays need audiences. Community needs theatre.
Why do we believe in them?	Because they are who we are serving. They need us, we need them.	We are so grateful for their support. They are like critical members of our community.	Because we know there is a demand for innovative, entertaining and cutting edge live theatre. It's a relationship we are continuing to cultivate. And as a home for independent theatre, audiences today may become artists tomorrow.

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Provides a flexible turnkey essential venue for independent companies. • Makes patrons feel welcome, has an accommodating box office, beautiful bar and lobby (although inadequate size-wise) • User-friendly box office services • Codes of Conduct, Respectful Workplaces and other safety & anti-harassment policies • Effective website and newsletter • Sound financial procedures in place • Grant funding has been successful through pandemic to present to maintain current levels of service • Good volunteer management • Appealing variety of programming at affordable prices • Central location close to public transit	• Lack of recognition and identity confusion • Clarity needed around conflict of interest • Lack of sufficiently diverse operating funding sources • Insufficient human and financial resources for growth of operations and maintenance services provided • Lack of community engagement capacity for venue and companies (pending requested increase to operating grants) • Need for update of governance, board manual • Staff and board, though diverse, do not reflect the full diversity of the community • Insufficient fundraising capacity – volunteer and staff • Still have a negative reputation among some members of the theatre community • Significant repairs and/or updates required to the building.
Opportunities	Threats
• New Marketing Strategy with funding pending for implementation • Increasing coordination of marketing and fundraising between TGT and Rescos • New or renovated facilities • Rebuild reputation with new leadership through consistent, clear communications • Gaining Diversity/Equity/Inclusion governance insights through participation in Arts Hub multi-org project • Other theatre companies operating venues, as well as other arts organisations in Ottawa are also under pressure & exploring alternatives, creating opportunity for new partnerships • Millennials are now the largest population in Canada and the average age of Cdns is 41. Gen Z (under 25) is also getting very interested in the arts. Develop programming and marketing strategy to fit.	• Changing demographics and ageing audiences. TGT suffers from this along with many others. • Live audiences are beginning to return in larger numbers but this is lagging at TGT in large enough numbers post-pandemic • Resident companies might no longer afford to rent the venue • Risk that a new local theatre catering to independent productions may emerge • Funding from the public sector at all three levels is frozen and being reduced • Competition for donor and funder funds increasing.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES | Based on the SWOT analysis

1. Continue to Build, Strengthen and Diversify Artistic Community Network

	Y1 (2024-25)	Y2 (2025-26)	Y3 (2026-27)
1a	Continue to book programming (seasons of Resident Company & guest indie theatre productions, one-off music/dance/comedy/variety/other performing arts productions)		
1b	Prioritise equity-deserving and underserved artists/groups/genres in programming work with these artists & groups to identify & overcome barriers to their presenting at TGT		
1c	Review & (re-)define Resident Company status, structure and relationship with TGT	Welcome new Resident Companies under the revised definition & structure	
1d	Review how Board members are chosen & how stakeholders are represented (e.g. Board composition, Advisors, etc.)	Renew Board membership using this revised approach, ensuring a more diverse Board that provides skillset TGT needs and ensures all stakeholders are represented and heard	
1e	Broaden definition of membership in TGT & consider option to include multiple types of membership	Expand membership through this renewed definition (revising by-laws if/as necessary), with increased participation by members of equity-deserving and underserved groups, and broader & deeper community engagement	
1f	Expand diversity of membership in TGT and on Board as allowed by existing membership terms & by-laws	Further expand diversity (utilizing revised membership definition and by-laws if/as necessary)	

2. Community Engagement, Rebuilding and Diversifying Patronage

	Y1 (2024-25)	Y2 (2025-26)	Y3 (2026-27)
2a	Hire Communications Coordinator and implement Marketing Strategy. Refresh website and brand.	Continue Marketing Strategy implementation, transitioning from project-based funding to ongoing program	Fully integrate ongoing Marketing Strategy implementation into ongoing core program activity, with sufficient funding to do so
2b	Hire Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) to seek avenues to diversify patronage through outreach to equity-deserving and underserved communities	CEC to make a priority of ongoing outreach to equity-deserving and underserved communities	
2c	Revise communications practices to better distinguish TGT brand from producing companies' identities	Continue to support better public/patron understanding of roles of TGT vs identities of individual producing companies/artists	

2d	Continuously strive to improve communications and marketing; revise Marketing Strategy as needed
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3. Transition to Long-Term Stability and Permanent Home

	Y1 (2024-25)	Y2 (2025-26)	Y3 (2026-27)
3a	Continue working on a long-term plan for a permanent home for TGT, dialoguing with potential partners.	Utilize new short-term lease (at 910 Gladstone) while work progresses on plans for a permanent home	
3b	Gather new information (e.g. from ongoing Arts Hub multi-org deliberations) and other theatres facing facility challenges, then determine which permanent home alternative to pursue	Pursue the selected permanent home prospect through a feasibility study, flesh out specifics of plan (e.g. site location, prospective partnerships for location, building, shared use of facilities, etc.), begin initial fundraising efforts (e.g. laying groundwork for a capital campaign), deepen relationships with elected officials, city staff, existing and prospective funders, private sector stakeholders, etc.	
3c	Continuously monitor evolving circumstances in the sector & neighbourhood, and adapt plans to changes in environment and		
3d	Continuously look for ways in which a long-term facility structure can best meet the needs of the whole community, including equity-deserving and underserved communities (remain up-to-date on accessibility concerns, look for partnership opportunities, seek & respond to input from equity-deserving and underserved groups on their needs and priorities for services and facility features, etc.)		
3e	Build a sustainable business model for TGT incorporating recommendations captured in the Feasibility Study		

OUR F.A.S.T. GOALS | Frequently discussed Ambitious Specific Transparent

Immediate, actionable goals, results and timelines in service of TGT’s Strategic Priorities listed above.

Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
Meet TGT’s staffing needs <i>(serves Strategic Priorities 1a, 1b and 2a-2d)</i>	Overcome TGT’s long standing understaffing by securing and retaining adequate staffing, with sufficient revenues to do so <i>(Purview of HR Committee, supported by staff, Finance Committee and Grants Committee)</i>	Recruit and engage new Community Engagement Coordinator	CEC hired and starting work spring of 2025
		Revise compensation for employees to reflect sector standards and satisfy employee expectations	New pay grid drafted by spring 2025
			Adequate funding secured to implement pay grid in f/y 2024-25
		Review staffing model, identify what works and what changes & expansions are needed	New staffing model approved by Board by spring 2025
			New model implemented in f/y 2025-26
		Seek additional funding to support new pay grid and staff model	Pay grid and model reflected in grant applications, spring 2025 onwards
			New revenues secured in grants received 2025 onward

Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
Ensure governance reflects TGT's values, including inclusivity, accountability, and transparency <i>(serves Strategic Priorities 1c-1f, 2c and 3c)</i>	Broaden Resident Company and individual membership to be more expansive, inclusive and diverse <i>(Purview of Governance Committee with input from Resident Companies)</i>	Review and re-define membership criteria of Resident Companies with TGT	New definition of what it means to be a Resident Company approved and posted on TGT website by end of FY 2024-2025
		Expand Resident Company membership by partnering and actively soliciting companies from equity-deserving & underserved communities	Discussions opened with prospective new Resident Companies who may fit the new criteria by early 2025
			New Resident Companies added in 2024-25, including at least one company from equity-deserving community
	Renew, expand and diversify membership in TGT <i>(Purview of Governance Committee, supported by staff and specifically CEC)</i>	Review membership terms & propose changes as needed	Renewed membership terms posted on TGT website by end of 2024
			By-law changes drafted for approval at TGT's AGM in December 2025
		Public campaign to recruit new membership, including greater representation of equity-deserving and underserved groups	Increase total membership in f/y 25-26 by 50%+ over 24-25
			Greater representation of equity-deserving groups in membership
	Revise Board, Advisor and Committee constituency for greater diversity and balance of representation without conflict of interest <i>(Purview of Governance Committee)</i>	New criteria for Board, Advisor and Committee member participation articulated and pursued	By-law changes identified and implemented by 2025 AGM, if needed
			Conflict of interest policy revised if needed
			Increased presence of individuals from equity-deserving groups on Board, Advisors, Committees

Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
Rebuild, grow and diversify audience <i>(Supports Strategic Priority 2)</i> <i>(Purview of CEC, supported by Resident Companies, Theatre Manager and Board)</i>	Increase attendance at TGT events	Maximize reach of communication tools through partnerships, active social media channels, and diversification of marketing approaches	10%+ year-over-year subscription increase each year to e-newsletter and social media followers
			Marketing resources used in full (no unspent advertising budget dollars, no unused Google Ad credits, in-kind offers accepted)
			Marketing Strategy communications tasks fully implemented, 2024-25 onwards
		Use Google Analytics to determine which tools are most effective	Communications metrics report presented by CEC to Board by June 2025
		Launch promotions and measure their effectiveness in putting “bums in seats”	10%+ year-over-year attendance each year per event
			10%+ year-over-year increase to overall annual TGT patronage
	Increase diversity of patronage at TGT events	Attract bookings by groups from or serving equity-deserving communities through ongoing partnerships, mentorship programs, and active solicitation	Year-over-year increase each year to proportion of productions focused on equity-deserving groups
		Identify and implement new communications channels to attract patrons from equity-deserving and underserved groups	Patronage tracking measures (e.g. audience surveys) document increase in diversity of patronage

Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
	Increase audience understanding of TGT and individual companies	Improved TGT and individual company branding on website & TGT communications	Patron feedback companies reflects increased understanding
Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
Ensure long-term stability of TGT <i>(Serves all Strategic Priorities, especially 1a, 2a, 2d, and 3a-3d)</i>	Ensure TGT always has a home through transition from end of current lease to eventual implementation of final permanent home solution <i>(Purview of Gladstone 2025 Committee)</i>	Successfully negotiate lease extension for 2025-2027	Plan “B” identified by summer 2025
			Negotiator engaged by summer 2024
			Lease extension negotiated and signed before June 2025
		Identify best prospect for permanent home solution among alternatives from pre-feasibility study	Informed recommendation submitted to and approved by Board by end of 2024
		Launch planning for permanent home	Specific prospects fulfilling selected permanent home identified by 2025
			Proposed partnerships & collaborators for funding, location, development & eventual occupation identified by 2026
	Ensure long-term financial viability of TGT <i>(Purview of Finance Committee, supported by Grants Committee and Fundraising Committee)</i>	Ongoing business model featuring balanced revenues & expenses developed	Business model document drafted by June 2025, incorporating new pay grid, staffing model, evolving attendance trends and facility considerations

Frequently discussed Goal	Ambitious Target	Specific Action	Transparent Result
		Increase revenues through diversified and broadened reach of programming, active grant and fundraising solicitations, to achieve a stable and adequate level of funding to meet TGT’s ongoing needs	Grant, sponsorship and fundraising targets accommodate expenditures needed to implement new business model in 2025-26 budget Actual annual revenues and expenses consistently meet budget targets