



SETTING THE STAGE

In June 2017, Seattle Arts & Lectures (SAL) successfully completed our 2014-2017 Strategic Plan guiding our work and growth across three key areas:

1. DEEPENING CONNECTIONS TO OUR COMMUNITY

SAL subscribers more than doubled and ticket sales more than tripled. We launched our blog and Instagram profile, and we piloted three new literary series to engage new audiences.

2. STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING THE REACH OF OUR WRITERS IN THE SCHOOLS (WITS) PROGRAM

We invested in our Writers-in-Residence by updating our compensation structure and we added the Youth Poet Laureate Program to further engage young poets.

3. BUILDING OUR ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

We nearly doubled the size of our team, grew our working capital, and raised special funds for our digital tools and systems upgrade.

BUILDING THE MOMENTUM

With so much to celebrate from the past three years, SAL is now poised to launch our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan to ensure SAL's mission continues to thrive in the decades to come—**to champion the literary arts by engaging and inspiring readers and writers of all generations in the Puget Sound region.**

In 2017/18, SAL is celebrating our 30th year of bringing the best writers and thinkers to Seattle's stages and classrooms. We are living in complicated times filled

with novel-length problems. Our work, at its core, is about engaging our community with opportunities for learning, conversation, insight, and inspiration as we elevate diverse stories, experiences, and voices. We create change-making spaces, building civic engagement and bringing storytellers together for smart, funny, nuanced conversations about the most important issues of our time.

Beginning in early 2017, the SAL board and staff gathered a range of input and best thinking to create

a new vision to guide our work for the next three years. This plan was formally adopted by the SAL Board in September 2017. It reflects our careful thinking about how SAL fits into the community, how to grow in thoughtful and strategic ways, and how we best support that growth. Through each area of the plan we've woven in our commitment to building a more just and equitable world, both locally and nationally, which is reflected in our increased commitment to access.

Fundamentally this plan is about deepening our engagement with the community and building the tools to do that work. Our next three years will increase our stability and strength to allow us to take risks, be brave, and create change.

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

PUBLIC PROGRAMS: Expand and deepen SAL's engagement with our audiences.

- **Engage new audiences in SAL's work.** Focus on engaging young people, people of color, and people who live/work on the Eastside so that our audiences mirror the demographics of the area.
- **Provide greater access to SAL programming.** Reach those who cannot afford or couldn't otherwise attend SAL events by providing free or reduced-price tickets for at least 10% of our halls.
- **Deepen SAL's connection and sustainability.** Increase subscription sales and subscriber retention. Increase community engagement in our work—online and in person—by growing our partnerships with local organizations, by increasing participation in our Summer Book Bingo program, by launching a podcast of SAL's rich literary archives, and by creating opportunities for people to meet and discuss post-event.

WRITERS IN THE SCHOOLS: Expand the impact of WITS on students' lives.

- **Allocate WITS resources equitably.** Reach more under-represented and high-needs students by creating a new, multi-tiered funding structure and by helping schools access funding.
- Continue to **hone a robust WITS program evaluation system** and use evaluation findings to shape program design and growth plans.
- **Amplify youth voices** through the Youth Poet Laureate Program, opportunities for youth leadership, and post-WITS engagement.
- **Support local writers in their work with youth** through paid writer-mentor positions, professional development opportunities, ongoing race and equity trainings, and by piloting a stipended apprentice program for young writers.

BUILDING CAPACITY: Ensure SAL has the adequate capacity and infrastructure to robustly support our outstanding work and maximize community impact.

- **Articulate our shared commitment to creating a more just and equitable world.** Ensure our work helps to advance this vision by defining and committing to ongoing external work, internal work, and continued learning for the staff and board.
- **Position SAL as a literary leader both locally and nationally.** Be a vocal public champion for the literary arts and arts access; be present in national coalitions and conversations; and shine a spotlight on local leaders, artists, and writers.
- **Upgrade our digital tools and systems to better support our work,** including implementing our new website database, and ticketing system.
- **Build a strong, strategic, and sustainable fund development program** that supports SAL's long-term goals, mission, and vision. Build our major donor program, increase our donor retention rates, expand our corporate partnerships, and explore endowment and planned giving programs to support future sustainability and risk-taking.