



Harn Museum of Art

STRATEGIC PLAN

2020 - 2025



**THE HARN
EXPANDING**

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INTRODUCTION

Since opening in 1990, the Harn Museum of Art at the University of Florida has been a cornerstone of the North Central Florida arts and culture ecosystem. In addition to serving the students and faculty of the University, the Harn is the most prominent fine art museum in the greater North Central Florida region, and demonstrates its commitment to being a cultural resource through its free admission and educational activities. The museum is known for its high quality and relevant exhibitions, many of which have toured across the United States.

The Harn's collections consist of more than 13,000 works of art. They focus on African, Asian, modern and contemporary art, and photography with significant representation of Ancient American and Oceanic art, and a growing collection of prints and drawings before 1850. The Harn recently received The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel and Roberta Vickers, an extensive collection of Florida-themed paintings, drawings and watercolors that includes many prominent American artists from the late 19th to the mid 20th centuries.

This gift of art is a catalyst for a 20,000-square-foot addition designed by Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners. The expansion will include more gallery space for exhibitions and a dedicated gallery for The Florida Art Collection. Additional areas will include a print study center providing UF students and faculty a place to closely analyze selected works of art that connect with class curriculum, a conservation studio for art care specialists to evaluate and conserve the collection, and ample art storage for the collection's future growth. Read more about the new wing on page 17.



Rendering by Tod Williams Billie
Tsien Architects | Partners



PLANNING PROCESS

In 2019, the Harn embarked on a strategic planning process designed to build from the museum's position of strength and outline the next steps in its development. To guide the strategic planning process, the Harn created a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of executive staff members. TDC, a Boston-based nonprofit research and consulting firm, was engaged to facilitate the planning. The planning process had five phases:

- PHASE 1** **Defining initial strategic questions.**
- PHASE 2** **Analyzing the Harn's recent operations to understand its current state.**
- PHASE 3** **Researching the Harn's market to understand where it sits within that market.**
- PHASE 4** **Developing strategies, tactics and financial projections that respond to the strategic questions, research and analysis.**
- PHASE 5** **Drafting and confirming the strategic plan.**

AREAS OF INQUIRY

Additionally, the planning process was organized around five areas of inquiry:

1. VISION AND IDENTITY

What does the museum stand for, and what is our vision for the future?

2. EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS

What should the Harn's program portfolio and collection strategy look like to best pursue its mission and vision?

3. AUDIENCE AND COMMUNITY

Who do we serve, what impact do we wish to have on those individuals, and what is our role in the community?

4. UNIVERSITY AND THE MUSEUM FIELD

How can the Harn authentically contribute to the goals of the University of Florida and the progress of the museum field?

5. FINANCE AND ORGANIZATION

How should the Harn structure its finances, staff and operations to support its mission and vision?

The Harn is pleased to share the following five-year strategic plan, which articulates the museum's vision for the future and the steps it will follow to achieve its goals. This document articulates the museum's strategic anchors: its mission, vision and values. Then, it provides a detailed description of goals and strategies for the next five years. Harn staff will continue to use this document to further refine and define tactics they will employ to meet the goals stated here.



STRATEGIC ANCHORS

This section outlines the overarching elements of the Harn's five-year strategic plan.

MISSION AND VISION

The University of Florida's Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art's mission is to inspire, educate and enrich people's lives through art.

The Harn uses the power of the visual arts to open conversations about our shared cultural history and pressing contemporary issues through exhibitions, collections, scholarship and programming of the highest caliber. The Harn strives to develop an academic community of creative, divergent thinkers in collaboration with the University of Florida, and fosters joy and community by welcoming students, UF faculty and staff and local residents to engage with art.



FIVE-YEAR VISION FOR SUCCESS

The Harn will be recognized as an essential part of the education and development of every University of Florida student by leveraging the unique power of art to cultivate lifelong learners, professionals, citizens and cultural participants. The Harn will be a visible cultural asset for the wider North Central Florida community, where all feel welcome to share in its collections, exhibitions, programs grounds and amenities alongside UF students.



STRATEGIC ANCHORS

VALUES

The mission, vision, and five-year vision for success highlight what that Harn seeks to do and why it finds that direction compelling. These values describe in what manner the Harn will go about this work.

Equity & Inclusion

By striving to be a critical part of every UF student's academic experience and welcome all residents of its greater community, the Harn is committing to equitably serving individuals of all racial, ethnic, gender, sexual identities, ability, and educational and economic backgrounds. The Harn also believes in fostering an inclusive and accessible workplace that celebrates and benefits from diversity.

Partnership & Collaboration

As an academic engine within the university and a catalyst for engagement and well-being, the Harn must work in active and engaged partnership with its constituents to achieve impact. Authentic collaboration allows the Harn to understand the needs of its beneficiaries and partners in order to determine how the museum can respond, thereby ensuring the Harn remains a relevant community asset.

Innovation & Experimentation

The Harn is asking complicated questions and striving for ambitious outcomes. While there are opportunities to learn from others' experiences, there are no simple answers or clearly-defined best practices to emulate—the Harn must discover and create the practices best suited to its community. In order to proactively pursue its vision, the Harn must think creatively, be comfortable with the possibility of failure, and learn and grow from every attempt.



Professionalism & Artistic Excellence

As the most prominent professional-caliber art museum in the North Central Florida region, the Harn is committed to providing a broad audience with exhibitions and programming that reflect the highest level of academic rigor and professional standards. This commitment extends to the Harn's view that the art it collects and displays—while encompassing a wide range of forms, artistic mediums and cultural traditions—should hold artistic, aesthetic and cultural significance.

Intellectual Freedom & Openness

The Harn believes that diversity of thought and opinion is critical to learning. As an educational institution, it is therefore committed to acting as a platform for open dialogue, debate and discussion about difficult and potentially controversial topics.

STRATEGIC GOALS



In order to achieve its five-year vision of success, the Harn will pursue the following Strategic Goals, which address its exhibitions and other public programming, academic and curricular work, atmosphere and public presence, and financial and managerial platform. These goals are:

01

EXPANDING CONNECTIONS

Inspire connection, creativity and inquiry by aligning and enhancing the museum's exhibition and public programming portfolio.

02

EXPANDING MINDS

Expand UF students' intellectual development and professional skills by growing and deepening art-centered contributions to academic life across disciplines while continuing to serve the Gainesville community by engaging students in community-facing programs.

03

EXPANDING EXPERIENCES

Become a campus and community destination by enhancing the Harn's visibility and visitor experience.

04

EXPANDING FOUNDATIONS

Enable the success of the previous goals by strengthening the museum's financial and managerial platform.

GOAL 1

Inspire connection, creativity, and inquiry by aligning and enhancing the museum's exhibition and public programming portfolio

The Harn seeks to serve UF students and residents of greater Gainesville through its exhibitions and programming. The Harn believes that museum participation can be a transformative experience; engendering a number of key outcomes in audiences and participants:

- Intellectual growth (knowledge about art and world cultures, engagement in contemporary sociopolitical issues, creativity, critical thinking)
- Socio-emotional development (empathy, self-expression social skills and other “soft skills,” entertainment, general emotional wellbeing)
- Long-term cultural participation (a sense of belonging in museums and other cultural spaces, a belief that museums are relevant)
- Civic engagement (the ability to reflect on one's role in society, the ability to thoughtfully engage with a community)

Sparking these outcomes could also result in increased attendance and long-term student/alumni affinity for the museum, which would support the Harn's mission, fundraising, and relevance to the University.

However, the Harn's current exhibition and programming portfolio is not fully aligned to its audiences, nor is it explicitly designed with these outcomes in mind. Keeping UF students top of mind while striving to appeal to community audiences as much as possible will serve UF students while also creating meaningful benefits for the broader community. Similarly, sharpening focus on the precise outcomes the Harn seeks will increase the museum's desired impact.

Strategy 1

Gain a greater understanding of current and potential audiences by developing capacity for collaborative program design and testing.

The Harn seeks to tailor its programmatic efforts to deliver intellectual and socio-emotional outcomes for its primary audience of UF students while also attracting a community audience. In order to accomplish this, the Harn needs a more sophisticated understanding of the needs, behaviors, and preferences of its desired audiences, and the myriad subgroups within. By investing in and developing organizational capacity for research, feedback, and collaboration with both students and community members with regard to programming and exhibitions, the Harn can more effectively execute its programming strategies.

Strategy 2

Grow attendance, inspire intellectual and artistic engagement, and improve curatorial operations by defining a sustainable and impactful multi-year exhibition cycle.

Exhibitions are the Harn's primary tool for attracting first-time and repeat audiences, as well as providing opportunities for people to meaningfully engage with art. While the Harn has found success with topical exhibitions that attract and engage audiences, there is little explicit alignment between programming choices, audiences, desired outcomes, and financial and operational considerations. Articulating a plan for exhibition portfolio design and execution, built around the Harn's foundational desire to serve UF students and ignite conversation and connection, will streamline workloads, rationalize financial decisions, and expand the museum's impact. Furthermore, constructing a new wing to permanently display The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers on a rotating basis, and to expand conservation, print study, and gallery space, will further enhance the museum's goal to engage and inspire our audience.

Strategy 3

Build a platform for a broad range of art-centric experiences by streamlining and strengthening non-exhibition programs and activities.

Non-exhibition programs and activities allow the Harn to offer audiences a range of activities and differentiated experiences based on their needs and desires. Among other purposes, programs can offer deeper engagement with a specific topic or opportunities for social or interactive experiences. For example, the Harn has found great success with Museum Nights due to its dual social and intellectual impact and its appeal to the UF student body as well as community members. Looking ahead, the Harn has an opportunity to align its programming strategy to support priority audiences and outcomes, and become more attractive and relevant to its constituencies.

GOAL 2

Expand UF students' intellectual development and professional skills by growing and deepening art-centered contributions to academic life across disciplines while continuing to serve the Gainesville community by engaging students in community-facing programs

As a museum dedicated to serving UF students, the Harn is therefore committed to working with faculty as a vital element of teaching and learning at UF. Due to its previous planning for curricular engagement, the Harn has successfully positioned itself as an attractive partner to faculty and educators. Looking ahead, the Harn will also define and pursue its own unique academic contributions by seeking partnerships that are best able to leverage its capabilities and lead to desired outcomes. With this evolution, the Harn will be able to more effectively describe its contribution to the University's academic mission and engender support from key university stakeholders and donors.

Strategy 1

Fully realize the Harn's potential to make academic contributions by refining and focusing interdisciplinary curricular collaboration.

Given UF's focus on interdisciplinary learning, and the Harn's established emphasis on cross-curricular partnerships, there is an opportunity to leverage previous success into a more refined, defined strategic thrust. By identifying clear pedagogical values, generating standard programming frameworks and refining the messaging and operations regarding curricular integration, the Harn can more meaningfully contribute to teaching and learning at UF. This approach would allow the Harn to be more efficient in getting broader swaths of UF students in the museum for their first visit—and the Harn has demonstrated that students are likely to return if they come once. This is also an arena in which the Harn could contribute to the museum world's larger conversation around relevance.

Strategy 2

Provide essential academic enrichment and pre-professional training to art, art history, art education, and museum studies students through academic partnerships.

Among all institutions within UF, the Harn is uniquely positioned to provide academic and pre-professional benefits to future artists, art historians, museum professionals, and arts educators. The Harn can create a natural pathway to engage students more deeply in the curatorial, educational, and operational functions of the Harn. Thus, the museum would generate strong advocates for the Harn among the student body, facilitators and contributors for community-facing initiatives, and a deeper pipeline of future “Harn alumni.” The creation of a conservation lab and print study center in the Harn’s new wing will provide additional opportunities for pre-professional training, and new spaces for students, faculty, curators and registrars to come together to study original works of art from the museum’s collection.

Strategy 3

Provide new opportunities for student learning and development, while continuing to serve the Gainesville community, by engaging students in community-facing programs.

The Harn has identified UF students as its primary audience; however, based on its founding mandate, its role as a public educational institution, and its position as the region’s most prominent fine arts museum, the Harn has a responsibility to serve the region’s youth and engage with the greater Gainesville community. By integrating the UF student body into this work, the Harn can meet this responsibility while providing meaningful learning opportunities for its primary audience.



GOAL 3

Become a campus and community destination by enhancing the Harn's visibility and visitor experience

As the most prominent art museum in its region, the Harn places a great deal of emphasis on being a place that anyone can visit and feel welcome, and aspires to serve as an informal gathering place for the UF and greater Gainesville communities. In order to meet its mandate to be a community resource while still prioritizing students, the Harn will focus on raising general awareness, sharpening its brand promise and creating a welcoming environment at the museum. The Harn now has a unique opportunity to leverage its recent major acquisition of The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers and planned expansion to generate greater public awareness, enthusiasm, visibility, and engagement.

Strategy 1

Make the museum more engaging and encourage a sense of belonging by improving the visitor experience at the Harn.

The Harn is currently seen by existing visitors as a welcoming and inviting place. However, anecdotal reports suggest that there is still progress to be made, especially with regard to issues of diversity and inclusion. By streamlining the introductory elements of a visit, rethinking the gallery experience, and investing in visitor services and visitor engagement, the Harn can more fully deliver on its aspiration to be a visitor-centric museum and its commitment to being a space where individuals of all identities feel welcome.



EXPANDING
EXPERIENCES

Strategy 2

Promote informal gathering by developing atmosphere and amenities.

The Harn desires to be an environment where people spend time informally, in addition to spending time viewing works in galleries or attending programming. However, the museum is not currently well positioned to encourage this kind of visitation. This could be improved in the shorter term by creating new initiatives and adding services inside the museum, or in the longer term by investing in improved campus amenities or developing the Cultural Plaza into an arts destination.

Strategy 3

Increase overall awareness by investing in marketing and communications.

While the Harn has high attendance, there are still large swaths of the university and community that are unfamiliar with the museum and its programs—and a significant number of potential audience members do not know that visiting the museum is free. Investing in promotion will make a larger fraction of the university and greater Gainesville communities aware of the opportunities the Harn offers, thus increasing attendance and expanding the Harn's impact.



GOAL 4

Enable the success of the Harn’s vision by strengthening the museum’s financial and managerial platform

In order to effectively pursue its ambitious goals, the Harn needs a strong and aligned organizational foundation. The Harn has identified challenges with its current systems and processes, particularly with respect to their ability to support strategic financial and fundraising decision-making, and to advance staff diversity goals. Strategic plan implementation will also require adjustments to the museum’s collecting strategy and organizational structure. Addressing these areas will position the Harn to pursue the programmatic strategies outlined above.

Strategy 1

Generate and execute a plan that allows the collection to better support teaching, exhibitions, and programming.

The Harn’s collection has long had some remarkable pieces and been well regarded by donors and supporters. The recent major acquisition of The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers offers students from all disciplines more material to draw from, and greatly enhances the collection’s holdings of American art, women artists and modern art. The gift also raises the Harn’s profile as a contender for major art gifts. Ongoing strategic collections growth can continue to elevate the Harn’s profile as a visitor destination, appeal to donors, and reputation among other museums. Aligning the collection with nascent exhibition, programming, teaching and stakeholder engagement goals may require adjusting collecting priorities and criteria to ensure collection growth supports strategy. Increasing the percentage of the collection that is available in digital format and on the museum’s website will enhance the Harn’s engagement with the UF student body and faculty, the Alachua County public school K-12 students, the general public and the scholarly community. Having more digital resources that represent the collection will also allow for more robust online instructional opportunities and augmented experiences related to the Harn’s exhibitions and public programming.

Strategy 2

Lay the foundation for effective fundraising by investing in future opportunities for philanthropy.

The Harn has a stable revenue base due to funding streams from the University of Florida and the museum’s endowment. However, at present these funds have meaningful restrictions that constrain investment in new programming, and are limited in their opportunities for growth. Therefore, increasing unrestricted and project-specific contributed revenue over time is an important organizational priority. Short-term, a campaign to fund the strategic plan— including the addition of a new wing to exhibit The Florida Art Collection, Gift of Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers, an improved entry, education spaces, and art storage – will enable the plan. In parallel, revising its membership model and refining tactics for donor cultivation could give the Harn incremental fundraising improvements. Longer- term, developing stronger alumni-like relationships with UF students and continuing to focus on major donor cultivation could set the Harn up for transformative gifts in the future.

Strategy 3

Allow for more strategic financial and operational decision-making by revising management systems and processes.

The Harn's current budgeting and financial management systems allow the museum to reconcile to the University and Foundation accounting systems as needed while tracking and managing expenses and cash flow. However, as currently structured, these processes are excessively labor intensive for finance staff and lack specific details, which impedes critical, budget-related decisions. Developing budgeting and financial management systems that allow for informed and responsive decision-making, maintain compliance with UF requirements, and can be executed efficiently will empower the Harn to allocate resources effectively and adjust operations when necessary. This planning process has also identified a need for the Harn to proactively collect and respond to data, which will require development into a learning-oriented organization with the capacity to test and adjust.

Strategy 4

Strengthen staffing model by examining and refining HR practices and organizational chart.

Staff capacity, skills, and perspectives are the primary resource that the Harn draws upon to accomplish its goals. Staff also reflect the museum's brand and values to the public through their interactions with the diverse range of individuals who make up the University of Florida student body and the larger Gainesville community. While the Harn has a skilled and dedicated staff, new organizational priorities may require additional capacity, expertise and perspectives. Ensuring that staff roles and responsibilities are well-structured and exploring opportunities to add new voices and viewpoints to the Harn team could further the museum's goals, especially with regard to creating a welcoming environment and ensuring relevant programming. The Harn will focus on DEAI initiatives through a staff-led working group. Initiatives will span a wide range and will include encouraging diverse applicant pools for job opportunities, creating meaningful roles for early-career professionals (including paid internships, substantive work study opportunities and curatorial fellowships), implementing implicit bias training for all staff, interrogating job descriptions for potential barriers to increased diversity and strengthening interdepartmental collaboration to empower staff to improve on these internal processes.

THE HARN EXPANDING

BUILDING ADDITION

Expanding the Harn Museum of Art's building is the beginning of something much larger and more impactful than just a larger physical space. Increasing our footprint provides more opportunities to accomplish the goals set forth in the Harn's strategic plan. To University students, faculty and staff, as well as artists, visitors and enthusiasts, **The Harn: Expanding** is really about expanding connections **AND** minds **AND** experiences **AND** foundations through art.

What's Inside

The 20,000-square-foot addition will include:

- **Two Exhibition Spaces** to showcase the Harn's collection including one gallery dedicated to The Florida Art Collection, a recent gift of 1,200 works of Florida-themed art given by Samuel H. and Roberta T. Vickers .
- **Print Study Room** providing UF students and faculty a place to closely analyze selected works of art that connect with class curriculum.
- **Conservation Studio** for art care specialists to evaluate and conserve the collection, as well as a space to observe the conservation process.
- **Art Storage Area** that will protect and hold the museum's permanent collection, as well as new works coming into the collection.



Architect

Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects | Partners is a New York-based studio committed to reflecting the values of non-profit, cultural and academic institutions toward an architecture of enduring vision. The practice is led by partners Tod Williams, Billie Tsien and Paul Schulhof (pictured right). Some of their notable museum projects include:

- Phoenix Art Museum, Phase I (1996) and II (2006), Phoenix, AZ
- The American Folk Art Museum (2001), New York, NY
- The Barnes Foundation (2012), Philadelphia, PA
- The Asia Society Hong Kong Center (2013), Admiralty, Hong Kong
- Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College (2019), Hanover, NH

Their current work includes the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, the renovation of David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center, New York City and the Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park, Chicago.



Completion in 2024



THE HARN
EXPANDING

HARN MUSEUM OF
ART