

INSTITUTE OF  
CONTEMPORARY  
ART / BOSTON

ICA

# Strategic Plan

Amplifying and expanding  
A Radical Welcome

2021-2025 EXTENSION



2021–2025 Extension

# A Radical Welcome

In June 2021, the Board of Trustees of the Institute of Contemporary Art ratified a four-year amplification and extension of the strategic plan—an expanded version of A Radical Welcome created to allow the ICA to recover and rebuild from the Covid-19 pandemic, cement gains, and complete Phase II of the Fund for the Future.

Read the [2016–2021 Strategic Plan: A Radical Welcome](#) here.

Read the [2016–2021 Summary of Activities](#) here.

The seismic societal shifts that began in 2020 required a reassessment and close examination of the 2016–2021 strategic plan's goals, objectives, and achievements.

The core of the original strategic plan remains as relevant and central as ever in this new phase: creating a museum at the intersection of contemporary art and civic life, a museum whose impact is centered on serving audiences, artists, teens, teachers, community partners, and increasingly diverse visitors from across Boston and the region.





## Areas of Focus

After a planning process that engaged the ICA's core constituencies—staff, governance, artists, neighbors, and partners—to understand their priorities and visions for the future, the ICA identified four areas of focus:

- Deepen impact as a community resource
- Embed equity and belonging throughout the institution
- Grow local, national, and global audiences
- Sustain and build artistic, educational, and virtual impact and financial excellence

These additional goals both complement and expand the goals of the 2016– 2021 strategic plan and will be realized through the following objectives and actions.



## Objectives

### **Serve as a platform and incubator for art and community.**

The ICA will invest in the local art community by offering our space as a container and incubator for programming, events, and art the community is creating. With direct impact on artist and makers, this effort will not only support individual working artists, it will also enhance programming for our myriad constituencies and amplify Boston's cultural landscape.

Early efforts in this area include establishing new partner programming (to both build on existing ICA content and to create new offerings); expanding collaborations with East Boston partners; continuing to present the biannual *James and Audrey Foster Prize* to highlight Boston-based artists; investing in Summer Stages Dance at the ICA programming to commission new work and provide residency space each summer; and to devote the Teen Gallery at Seaport Studio to local arts organizations without a brick-and-mortar location for half of the year.

### **Invest in pay equity and career pathways.**

The ICA will both take short-term action to promote equity in compensation among staff and develop a long-term plan to address cost of living in the Boston area. Guiding this work is an ongoing commitment to pay equity and transparency, defined by the ICA as:

- *Pay equity*: the practice of mitigating employee wage inequalities based on non-job-related factors such as race and gender.
- *Transparency*: the practice of making the criteria for determining salaries open and available to all employees.





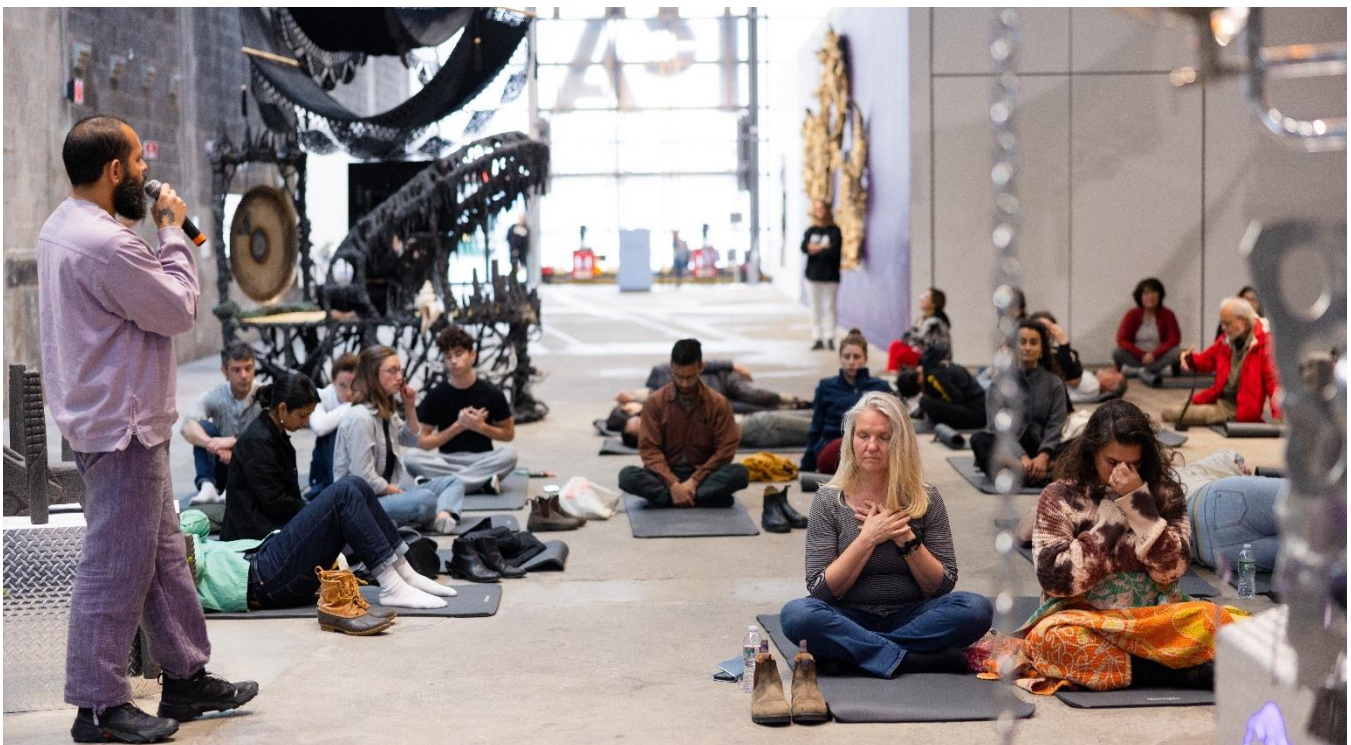


Within this strategic priority, the ICA will focus its efforts on the development and utilization of salary bands to provide structure for salary decisions, provide consistency and promote equity and fairness within each grade level, ensure knowledge of the responsibilities within a position and the associated salary range, and provide a clearer understanding of professional growth within the organization.

In addition to direct support of staff through compensation, training, and professional development, the ICA is invested in supporting future leaders and widening the field. Beginning in 2023, the ICA will increase its paid, equitable, out-of-school-time learning opportunities for teens and pre-career programs to support young people in building skills and pathways and remove barriers to participation.

## Continue to grow, diversify, and serve audiences through programs and partnerships.

Building on the strength of the strategic plan's first five years (2016–2021), the ICA is committed to investing in the relational model we have developed over many years by deepening and broadening partnerships with artists, community partners, Boston Public Schools, and other arts and culture organizations to introduce new audiences to the ICA. The opening of the ICA's waterfront home in 2006—followed by the opening of Watershed in 2018—created a platform for art, ideas, and convening. Today, we have expanded that definition as we focus and invest in the museum as a dynamic space where artists, audiences, and staff are in dialogue with the art, issues, and ideas of our time.



## Leverage the Watershed, Venice Biennale, Simone Leigh exhibition, and other special opportunities to deepen relationships, engagement, and reach.

The ICA is committed to seizing strategic and opportune special opportunities to advance the museum's mission and position the ICA as museum and thought leader creating timely, impactful, and relevant experiences for a range of diverse audiences.

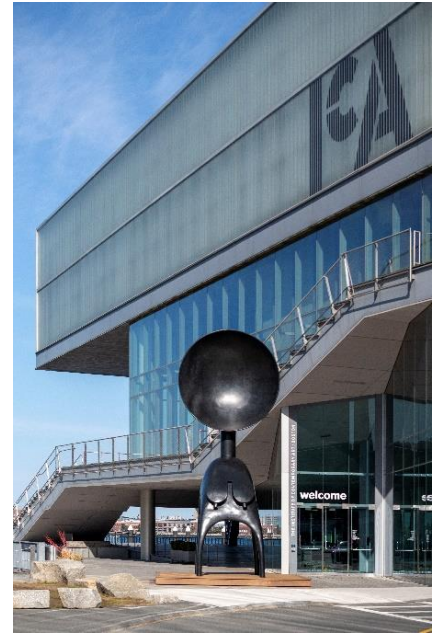
This work has already begun both abroad and at home: with the international stage offered by the ICA's commissioning of Simone Leigh for the U.S. Pavilion in the 2022 Venice Biennale, to widespread critical and popular acclaim, and with local investment in artists, community partners, and Boston's cultural landscape through the conversion of a condemned space into the Watershed. Initiatives will be selected with the dual goals of raising the awareness of the ICA and the city of Boston as a destination for contemporary art and demonstrating leadership in the field locally, nationally, and internationally.

## About the ICA

Founded in 1936, the Institute of Contemporary Art champions artists and audiences to center contemporary art in civic life. Through exhibitions, performances, education, and a collection focused on women and artists of color, the ICA embraces its responsibility to ensure that everyone can see themselves in our galleries and on our stage, that contemporary art and art education are accessible to all, and that the museum broadly shares the beauty and power of visibility, representation, and a wide diversity of artistic voices.

## Mission

The Institute of Contemporary Art strives to share the pleasures of reflection, inspiration, provocation, and imagination that contemporary art offers through public access to art, artists, and the creative process.



## Images

### COVER

ICA Teen Night. Photo by Lauren Miller.

### PAGE ONE

Artist Virgil Abloh with ICA teens during a walkthrough of his 2021 exhibition *Virgil Abloh: "Figures of Speech"*. Photo by Mel Taing.

### PAGE TWO FROM TOP

Installation view, *Rose B. Simpson: Legacies*, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, 2022–2023. Photo by Mel Taing.

Firelei Báez, *To breathe full and free: a declaration, a re-visioning, a correction* (19°36'16.9"N 72°13'07.0"W, 42° 21'48.762" N 71°1'59.628" W), 2021. Installation view, ICA Watershed, 2021.

Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan, New York. Photo by Chuck Choi. © Firelei Báez

### PAGE THREE FROM TOP

Jazz Urbane Cafe's Imagine Orchestra performing at the ICA.

The recipients of the 2021 *James and Audrey Foster Prize*—Marlon Forrester, Eben Haines, and Dell Marie Hamilton—participating in The Artist's Voice.

ICA Seaport Studio. Photo by Lauren Miller.

Installation view, *Napoleon Jones-Henderson: I Am As I Am—A Man*, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, 2022. Photo by Mel Taing.

### PAGE FOUR FROM TOP

Photo by Nohemi Rodriguez.

Audiences participating in a sound bath in *Guadalupe Maravilla: Mariposa Relámpago* at the ICA Watershed. Photo by Ally Schmalig.

### PAGE FIVE

Simone Leigh, *Satellite*, 2022. Bronze, 24 feet × 10 feet × 7 feet 7 inches (7.3 × 3 × 2.3 m). Installation view, *Simone Leigh*, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston, 2023. Courtesy the artist and Matthew Marks Gallery. Photo by Timothy Schenck. © Simone Leigh