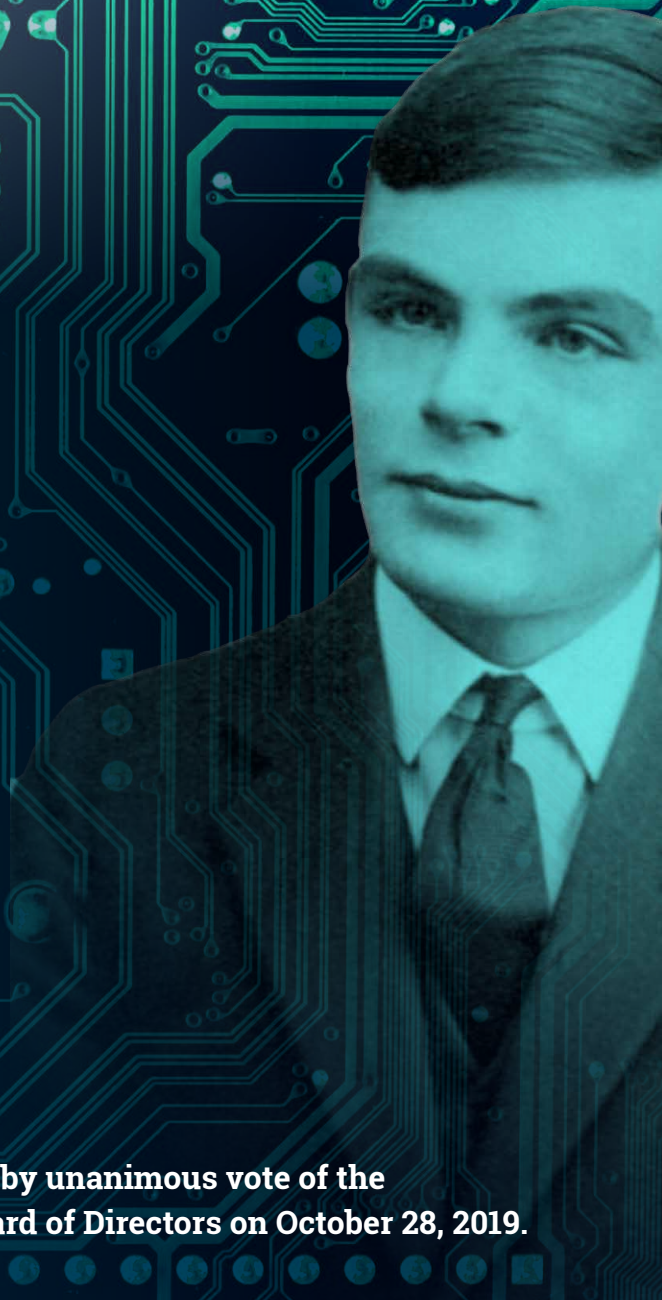


01000001 01101101 01100101 011100
01100011 01100001 01101110 001000
0110 01101101 01110000
0110 01110010 00100000
01010 01101111 01100010
0110 01100011 01100011 01100011
0110011 01100101 01

AMERICAN COMPUTER & ROBOTICS MUSEUM

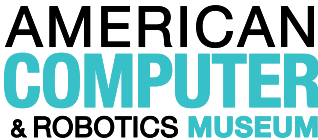
STRATEGIC PLAN | 2020—2021—2022



Approved by unanimous vote of the
ACRM Board of Directors on October 28, 2019.

Table of Contents

- Letter from the Board President 3
- Acknowledgments 4
- About the Museum 5
- Mission, Vision, and Core Commitments..... 7
- Strategic Goals 8
- Assumptions 13
- Evaluation 14
- Next Steps 15



American Computer & Robotics Museum
2023 Stadium Drive, Suite 1-A
Bozeman, Montana 59715
406-582-1288

www.acrmuseum.org

The American Computer & Robotics Museum is an IRS-approved 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (Federal Tax Identification No. 81-0460318).

Publication date: November 12, 2019

Reflecting on the Past, Planning for the Future

The past twelve months have been a time of tremendous change at the American Computer & Robotics Museum. As many of you know, my husband and the museum's founder, George Keremedjiev, passed away late last year. In the wake of this terrible and unexpected event, our many friends and colleagues banded together to ensure that the museum would thrive in George's absence. As a result of their ongoing generosity and commitment, we have taken the first of many steps towards sustainability and growth, and it is our hope that the museum will serve as a living memorial to George and his passion for science and technology education for many years to come.

This Strategic Plan is the culmination of several months of diligent work undertaken by the museum's Board of Directors. The initial Plan was developed over the course of a three-day retreat in August 2019, hosted by Zoot Enterprises and facilitated by Art Wolf of WOLF Consulting. It was informed in part by the results of a Community Survey that invited museum visitors and the community at large to comment on the museum's current effectiveness and identify opportunities for growth. Further collaboration and conversation at the Board, staff and community levels has resulted in the Plan you see today.

In this Plan, we present our Vision for the Future, and chart specific activities that will help us achieve our strategic goals over the next three years.



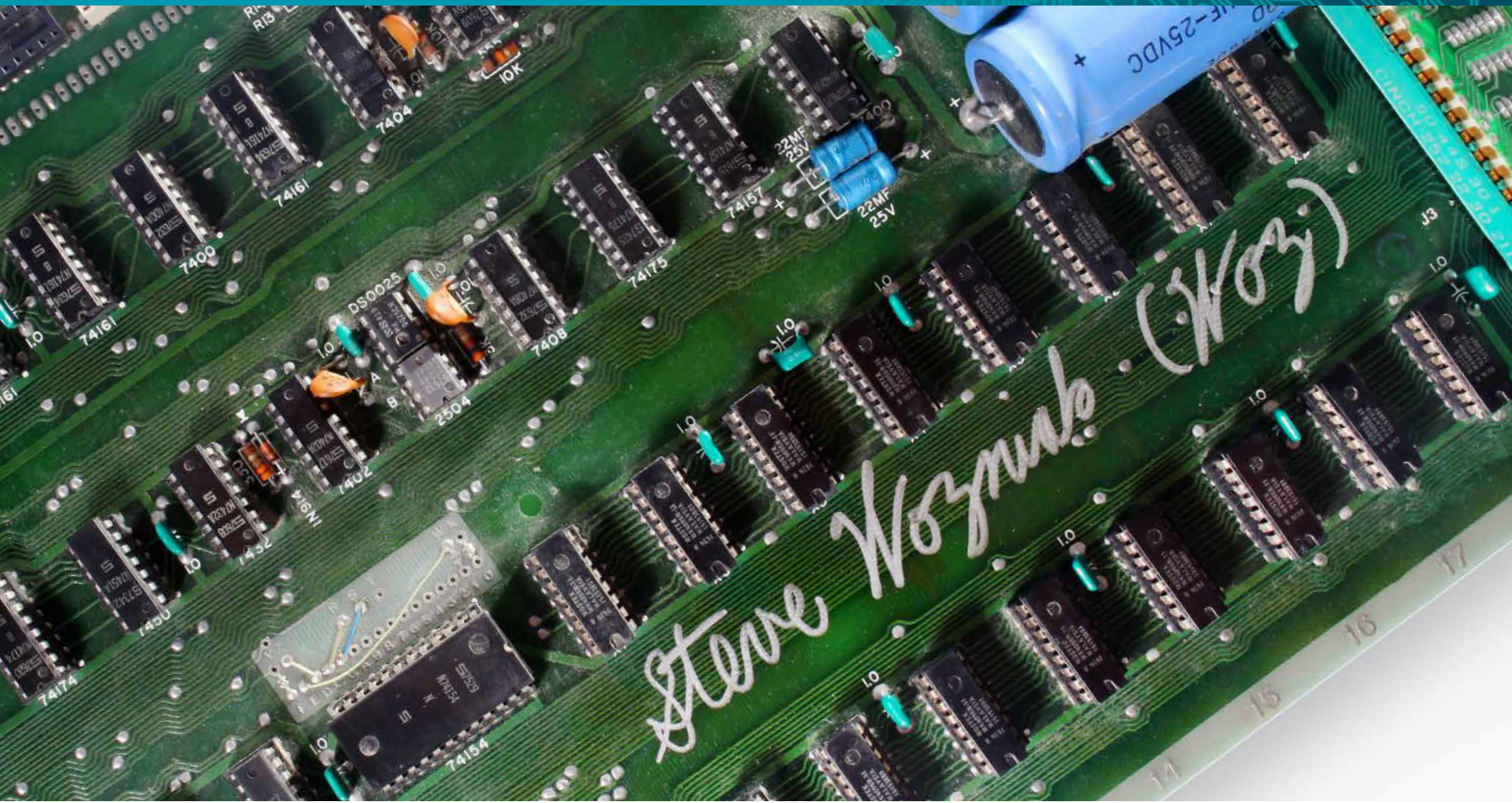
These strategic goals are: Achieve Financial Stability; Strengthen Internal Operations; Broaden our Reach; Achieve Excellence in Collections; and Build a Compelling Space. And I'm happy to report that we've already made significant progress in many areas! You'll see that our Mission and Vision statements have also been updated to reflect our evolving role as a regional cultural resource, an educational innovator, and a valued program partner.

I'd like to personally thank all involved in crafting this plan for their time, expertise, and energy, and for helping to secure the museum's bright future!

Sincerely,
Barbara Keremedjiev
Co-Founder and Board President

Barbara Keremedjiev, ACRM
Co-Founder and Board President
Bozeman Daily Chronicle photo

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Apple 1 Computer
signed by Steve
Wozniak,
ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

A Collective Commitment to Success

This Strategic Plan is the direct result of a collective commitment from our Board of Directors to the museum's ongoing success. So, to the ACRM Board Members and staff who gave up a summer weekend or otherwise contributed to the development of this plan – Federico Faggin, Larry Johnson, Barbara Keremedjiev, Mark Keremedjiev, Victor Keremedjiev, Nels Leutwiler, Chris Nelson, Rebekah Nelson, Nancy Quist, and Eleanor Barker – we offer our gratitude.

Completing this plan would not have been possible without the guidance of Art Wolf of WOLF Consulting. With three decades of experience as a museum curator, director, president, and trustee

– including a stint as Executive Director of Museum of the Rockies here in Bozeman – Art's advice, suggestions, and encouragement proved invaluable to the success of the planning process.

Sincere thanks also go out to Zoot Enterprises in Bozeman, Montana, for the generous use of their boardroom and cafeteria during our three-day Strategic Planning retreat. The gracious and welcoming meeting space they provided is just one facet of the company's deep commitment to philanthropy, which has delivered enormous benefits to ACRM and to dozens of other nonprofits in our community who receive their support.

Thank you!

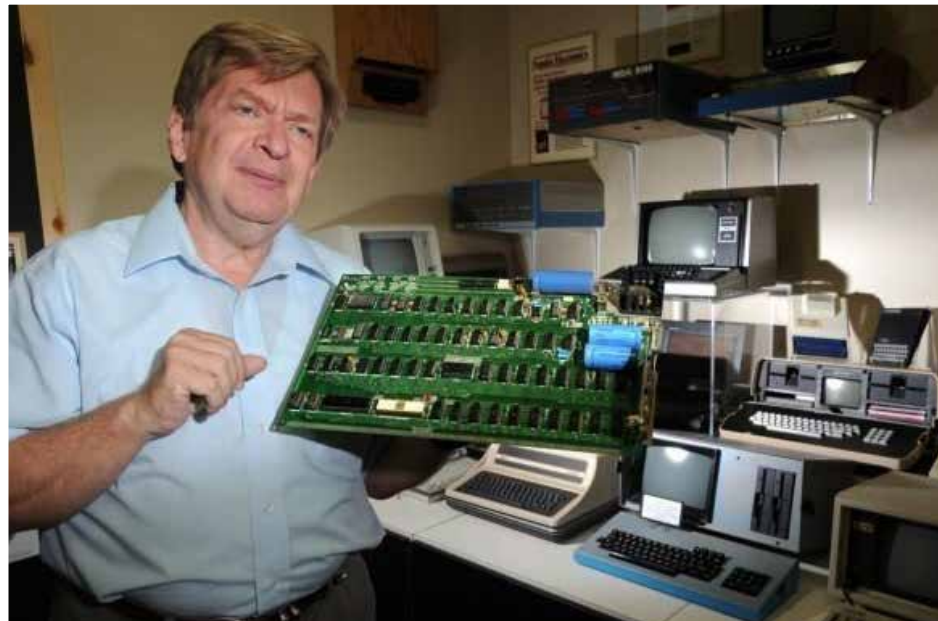
Thirty Years and Counting

It all started with a calculator.

Back in the early 1980s, George Keremedjiev was visiting Florida for his consulting business, Tecknow Education Services. George had contracted with a manufacturing firm to provide technical advice for streamlining their metalforming operations, and during a break from this work, he wandered into a small antique shop. There among the bric-a-brac, he saw an old machine on display, and noticed that it was mislabeled: the shop owner thought it was a check printer, but George correctly identified it as a Brunsviga mechanical calculator. He purchased it and brought it home, all the while thinking what a shame it was that people weren't more familiar with this early technology, didn't understand its historical significance, and weren't aware of its impact on invention and innovation.

This calculator was the first piece in what grew to be a comprehensive and significant collection that forms the core of the museum today. George and his wife Barbara officially opened the American Computer & Robotics Museum in Bozeman, Montana in 1990. And for the next 29 years, they worked together tirelessly to expand the collection, design compelling exhibits, and promote their educational vision to museum visitors from around the world.

In 1994, ACRM won the prestigious Dibner Award for Excellence in Museum Exhibits from the Society for the History of Technology. The Dibner Award recognizes exhibits that raise historical issues in a manner accessible to both the general public and to experts in the field – and this focus on thoughtful



storytelling and contextual interpretation remains the cornerstone of ACRM's exhibit philosophy.

In 1997, ACRM launched an annual awards ceremony to honor past and present innovators in computing, communications, and technology. The George R. Stibitz Computer and Communications Award is named in honor of Dr. Stibitz, whose work at Bell Laboratories in the 1930s helped set the stage for modern digital computing. ACRM is honored to display a reproduction of his breakthrough technology, the Model K binary adder, built for the museum by Dr. Stibitz himself.

ACRM established the Edward O. Wilson Biodiversity Technology Pioneer Award in 2009 to recognize scientists and researchers who have utilized computer technology to further our understanding of the complex web of life on Earth. Biologist E.O. Wilson – who received a Stibitz award in 2006 for spearheading the electronic Encyclopedia of Life –

George Keremedjiev, ACRM Co-Founder
Bozeman Daily Chronicle photo

ABOUT THE MUSEUM



Original rotors from German Enigma encryption machine, courtesy of National Cryptologic Museum
Shawn Raecke photo

presented the very first Wilson Award, and has returned to Bozeman in several subsequent years to participate in the ceremonies. The museum partners with Montana State University to organize public lectures, master classes and workshops in conjunction with the Awards that are led by Stibitz and Wilson honorees. These events are attended by hundreds of students and community members, who embrace this unique opportunity to interact with luminaries of computer science and biodiversity.

George himself was recognized for his achievements in 2009, when he received an honorary doctorate from MSU – the highest commendation that the university confers. “The university wanted to honor him for his fantastic service in bringing high-level pioneers to the university to interact with students and faculty,” remembers John Paxton, Director of MSU’s Gianforte School of Computing.

Through the years, ACRM has consistently earned glowing reviews from visitors on social media, and has merited national coverage in USA Today, Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Atlas

Obscura, and numerous other print and digital outlets. The longest continuously operating museum of its kind, ACRM is proud to have been described by Edward O. Wilson as, “Inch for inch, the best museum in the world.”

Eleanor Barker now serves as ACRM’s Executive Director, and in collaboration with the Board of Directors, is working to position the museum as an anchor institution in Bozeman’s cultural landscape. Expect to hear regular updates about the museum’s growing community impacts, central among which are the Stibitz and Wilson Awards, set to resume in 2020.

In an era characterized by an accelerating pace of technological change and the increasing integration of computers into our daily lives, the museum’s mission has never been more relevant. Learning about the past helps us to live critically in the present, and a deep understanding of the underpinnings of today’s scientific and technological innovations is essential as we set about designing the pathways that will determine the course of our collective future.

MISSION, VISION, AND CORE COMMITMENTS

Our Mission:

ACRM inspires visitors of all ages to explore the past and imagine the future of the Information Age through thought-provoking exhibits, innovative storytelling, and the bold exchange of ideas.

Our Vision:

ACRM is an enduring institution that advances public awareness of the evolving intersection between humanity and technology to thereby spur innovation and impact the future.

Our Core Commitments:

Preservation

We maintain a collection that is thoroughly catalogued, safely stored, deliberately evolving, and readily available to researchers.

Excellence

We embody best practices in business operations, financial stewardship, and the development and cultivation of institutional talent.

Collaboration

We seek out partnerships and build alliances with diverse sets of stakeholders from around the country so as to build a broad platform for innovative ideas.

Education

We develop and share informative exhibits and effective programs with visitors and partner institutions to advance knowledge and understanding across constituencies.

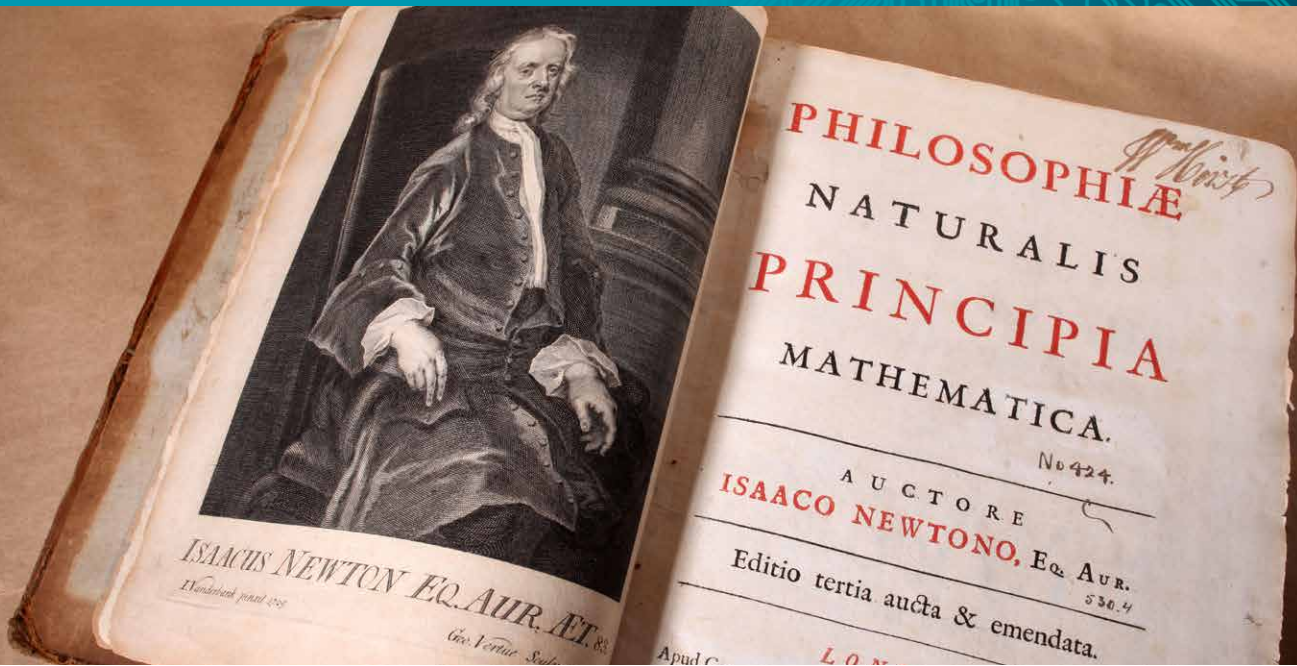
Accessibility

We present artifacts in a manner that celebrates human achievements, embraces historical contexts, and informs and inspires both novices and experts.



Volta Pile manufactured in Italy
circa 1800, ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

STRATEGIC GOALS



Goal 1: Achieve Financial Stability

Over the next three years, ACRM's board and staff will work to ensure the museum's vibrant and enduring future by pursuing diversified income streams, increasing our fundraising capacity, and growing our endowment. These activities will require significant investments in equipment, inventory, and personnel, the costs of which will be partially offset by projected increases in earned and donated income.

Objective: Invest in the team to increase institutional effectiveness.

Initiatives:

- Grow staff capacity by adding additional positions and consolidating others (Visitor Services Manager, Development Director, etc.).
- Identify and calendar professional development and training opportunities for staff and board members.
- Join the global community of practice by participating in annual industry conferences, including ASTC and Building Museums.

Objective: Diversify earned income sources to create predictable cash streams and smooth seasonality.

Initiatives:

- Launch admission sales and general memberships.
- Expand gift shop with exhibit-related and ACRM-branded products.
- Develop revenue-generating public programs and special events (school field trips, lectures, film screenings, etc.).

Objective: Increase donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Initiatives:

- Inaugurate Annual Appeal to energize our constituency, capture individual donors, and improve donor retention.
- Pursue grants from foundations, institutions, and government sources.
- Build corporate sponsorship program.
- Establish Planned Giving program.

ABOVE: Principia Mathematica by Sir Isaac Newton, Third Edition printed 1726, courtesy of GBK Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

Goal 2: Strengthen Internal Operations

To ensure long-term sustainability, ACRM will establish consistent internal processes that reflect best practices for responsible fiscal management and effective governance. The museum commits to the acquisition, management, and allocation of its financial resources in a way that is ethically responsible and serves to advance our mission. This can largely be achieved using available resources, and by leveraging the considerable skills and experience of generous volunteers in our museum community.

Objective: Establish a reliable and replicable process for generating accurate annual and multi-year reports and regularly measuring institutional fiscal health.

Initiatives:

- Migrate accounting to QuickBooks; streamline chart of accounts; track income and expenses for restricted funding sources.
- Merge Admissions, memberships, and gift shop sales data into centralized POS system.
- Prepare for annual independent financial review and/or audit.

Objective: Prepare ACRM board members to govern effectively and serve as ambassadors charged with advancing the mission.

Initiatives:

- Develop position descriptions for board officers; develop committee charters.
- Set goals for board composition and qualifications; create pathways for board recruitment.
- Reinforce a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities through a comprehensive orientation for incoming board members.
- Review and update Strategic Plan annually.



Objective: Develop staff policies and processes to boost operational effectiveness and facilitate institutional stability.

Initiatives:

- Generate policy manuals, position descriptions, staff handbook, etc.
- Build organizational chart to formalize reporting relationships and command chain.

Objective: Seek accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums.

Initiatives:

- Join the American Alliance of Museums as a member institution.
- Pledge to follow National Standards & Best Practices for Museums.
- Conduct comprehensive self-study for Museum Assessment Program.
- Prepare for Core Documents Verification.

ABOVE: One million transistors, ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

STRATEGIC GOALS



First Neural Computer (detail),
ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

Goal 3: Broaden our Reach

We will establish ACRM as an educational leader by deepening and distinguishing our exhibits, programs, and interpretive models. We will reinforce our national reputation through active outreach and collaboration with educational institutions, industry leaders, and our extensive network of pioneers and experts in the field. Achieving this goal will require significant investments of time and effort, and will be further advanced through thoughtful investment in temporary and permanent staff positions: museum studies interns, curatorial consultants, marketing professionals, graphic designers.

Objective: Develop and promote a broad suite of programs for local and national audiences to drive visitation, increase engagement, and cement our status as an innovator in education.

Initiatives:

- Reestablish Stibitz and Wilson Awards as signature community events.
- Design and launch new programs (lectures, workshops, master classes, etc.) that serve to educate, inform and entertain our core constituencies.
- Develop and implement grade-level curriculums to enhance field trip experiences for students and educators.
- Establish metrics for evaluating program success.

Objective: Present relevant and meaningful exhibits, display artifacts in historical context, and offer enhanced opportunities for storytelling.

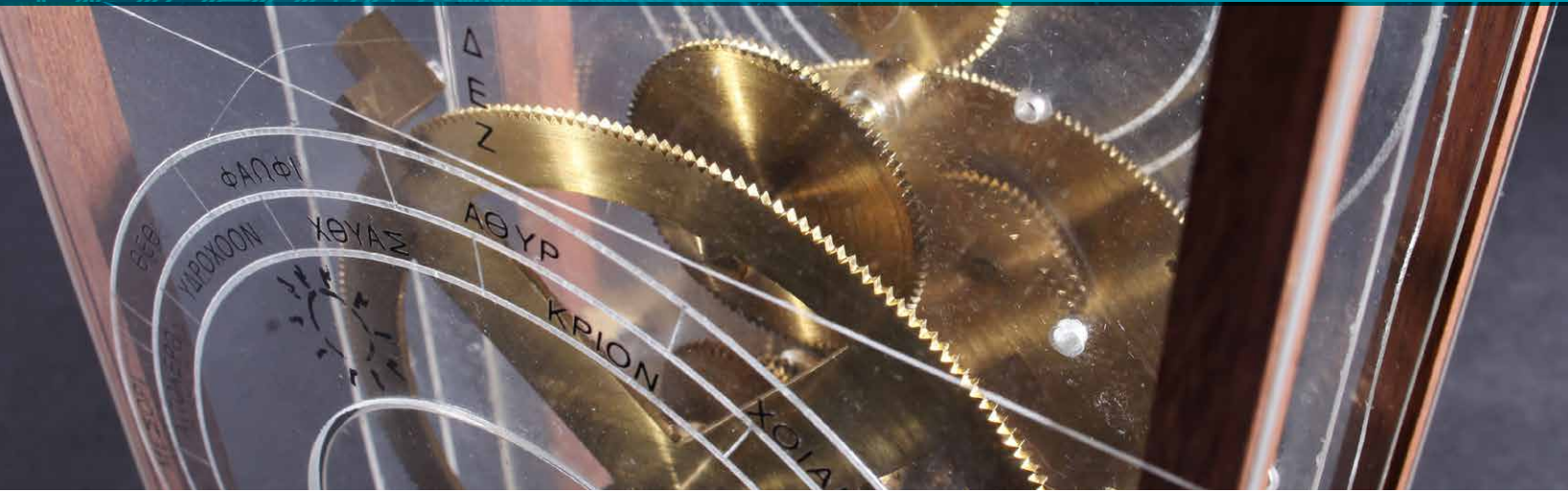
Initiatives:

- Update signage and wayfinding inside the museum.
- Develop pop-up exhibits to present at outreach events and host institutions across the community.
- Regularly host temporary and traveling exhibits drawn from our own collection or rented from other institutions.
- Establish metrics for evaluating exhibit success.
- Commission an Interpretive Plan to guide future exhibit investments and programmatic initiatives.

Objective: Strengthen existing communication channels and improve online presence to maximize our impact and magnify our reach.

Initiatives:

- Redesign marketing assets to solidify brand identity.
- Maintain a website that is fresh, relevant and up to date.
- Increase engagement on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.).
- Launch a quarterly newsletter for members and subscribers.
- Access resources and global body of practice through membership in the Association of Science–Technology Centers.



Goal 4: Achieve Excellence in Collections

ACRM will preserve, expand, and actively exhibit our permanent collection, making it available for research and safeguarding it as an essential source of knowledge about the Information Age. We will forge academic partnerships with Montana State University, the Charles Babbage Institute and other institutions to implement procedures and practices for artifact care and cataloguing. This work will initially be overseen by our board President, with plans to create a permanent Curator position as our budget allows.

Reproduction Antikythera Mechanism
(detail), ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

Objective: Generate a comprehensive inventory of our current holdings.

Initiatives:

- Purchase Collection Management software system.
- Inventory artifacts, library and ephemera.
- Create searchable online database for researchers and collaborators.

Objective: Develop a mission-aligned strategy to guide future acquisitions

Initiatives:

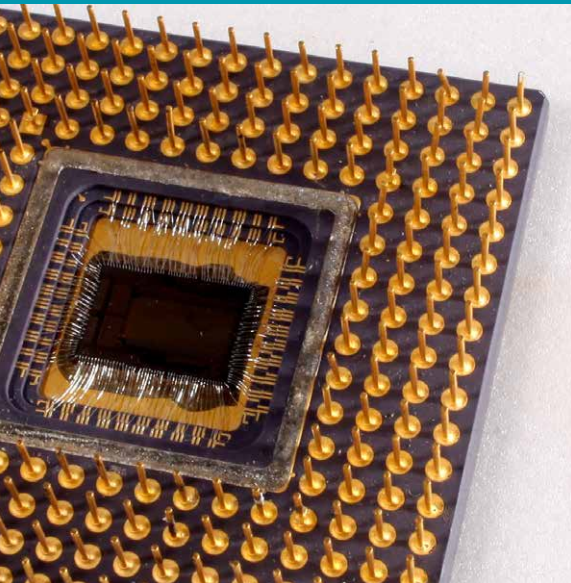
- Create a full-time Curator position.
- Design and implement Acquisition Plan and Collections Policy.

Objective: Create collections-based programming that increases accessibility, broadcasts relevance, and embodies best practices.

Initiatives:

- Initiate Oral History program to gather and preserve first-person chronicles of early computing pioneers and early tech adopters.
- Establish Visiting Scholars program in partnership with MSU, CBI, and other academic partners.
- Digitize collection, and create searchable online ACRM archive.

STRATEGIC GOALS



Electronically Trainable Analog
Neural Network (ETANN) chip,
ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

Goal 5: Build a Compelling Space

ACRM will elevate the museum experience for our visitors by occupying an inspiring space that provides expanded opportunities for exhibit and program growth, improves access to our collection, enhances enjoyment through on-site amenities, and serves as an anchor for our community.

Objective: Investigate potential locations for the museum's permanent facility.

Initiatives:

- Explore development opportunities on both state-owned and privately-owned parcels in Bozeman and Belgrade.
- Explore co-location opportunities with mission-aligned institutions.
- Network with Chamber of Commerce, SWMBIA, real estate leads groups, etc. for up-to-the-minute information about planned development.

Objective: Determine appropriate scale and scope for the museum's permanent facility.

Initiatives:

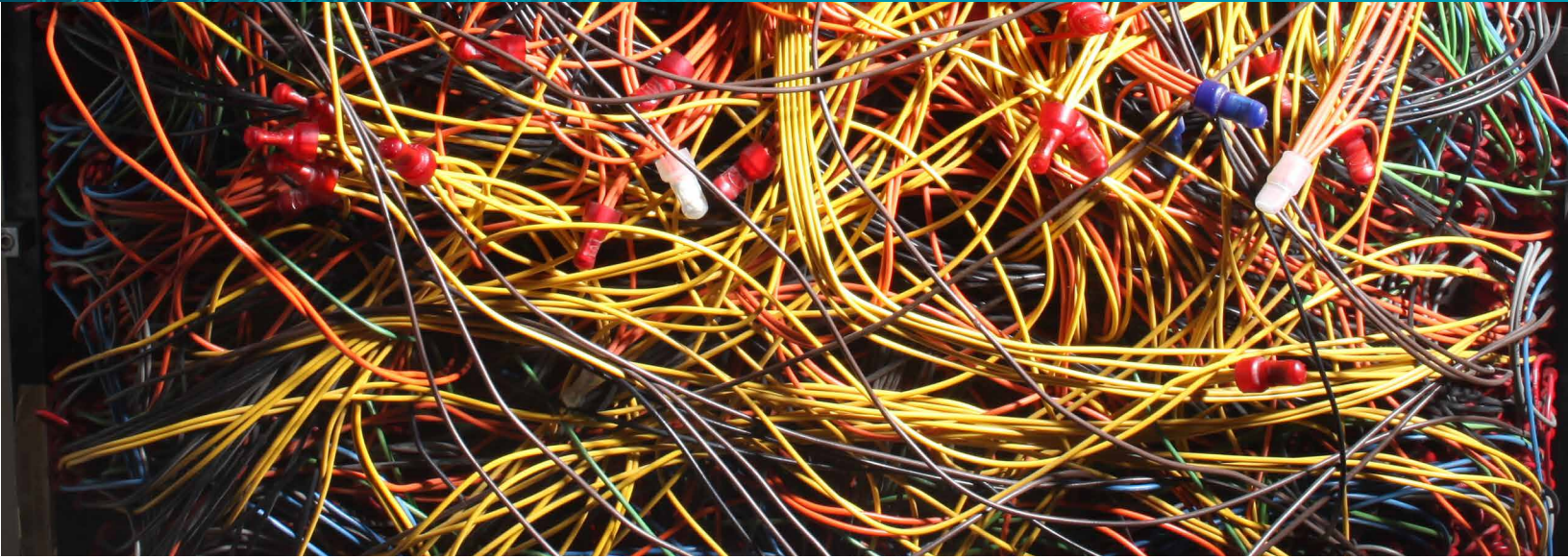
- Host charrettes for museum members, community stakeholders, school district representatives, non-profit professionals, real estate developers, and others.
- Engage Montana State University School of Architecture students to develop preliminary needs analysis and cost estimates.

Objective: Determine specific financial requirements for the permanent facility to help shape Capital Campaign.

Initiatives:

- Contract with architect to generate accurate construction cost estimates.
- Create a comprehensive three-year operational plan for the new space based on realistic projections for annual attendance, earned income, exhibit and equipment investments, and overhead.
- Understand the projected scope of Capital Campaign and assess organizational fundraising capacity.
- Enter "silent phase" of Capital Campaign.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CONTINGENCIES



Understanding Current Conditions to Strengthen the Plan

The assumptions underpinning this Strategic Plan were identified through consideration of selected SWOT findings that may impact ACRM during the planning horizon.

Key Assumption 1: Finances

Ongoing fundraising initiatives will result in an increase in donated and earned income at a rate of 15% annually over current levels for the next three to five years.

Key Assumption 2: Customers

Thoughtful use of marketing dollars, an increase in brand visibility through partnerships with mission-aligned institutions, and a population boom in the Gallatin Valley will result in a 10% annual increase in attendance over the next three to five years.

Key Assumption 3: Community Need

ACRM can capitalize on a current global interest in coding and on a growing state-wide commitment to STEM education to position itself and its mission at the forefront of ongoing community conversations on a range of hot-button topics (the ethics of AI, climate change, self-driving cars, etc.). We will be looked to as a source of knowledge and expertise in guiding these conversations.

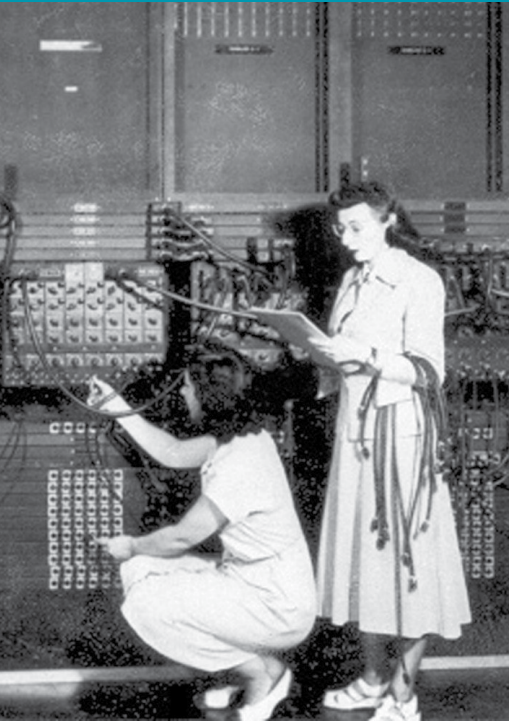
Key Assumptions 4: Resources

Continued development of our organizational structure, governance capacity, personnel resources, and marketing capability will be required to support ACRM's continued strategic growth. Additionally, Stibitz and Wilson honorees will generously offer their considerable technical expertise and significant public profiles to help advance our mission.

Assumption 5: Contingencies

In the event that ACRM meets or exceeds projected income and fundraising targets, the museum is prepared to accelerate the timeline of specific initiatives and activities presented in this Strategic Plan. If any of the above assumptions fail to hold true, ACRM is prepared to respond to specific contingencies with actions that may include scaling back proposed initiatives, reducing annual operating costs, or generating emergency operating capital.

ABOVE: Computer plug board (detail), ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo



ENIAC programmers from ACRM
Women in Computing exhibit

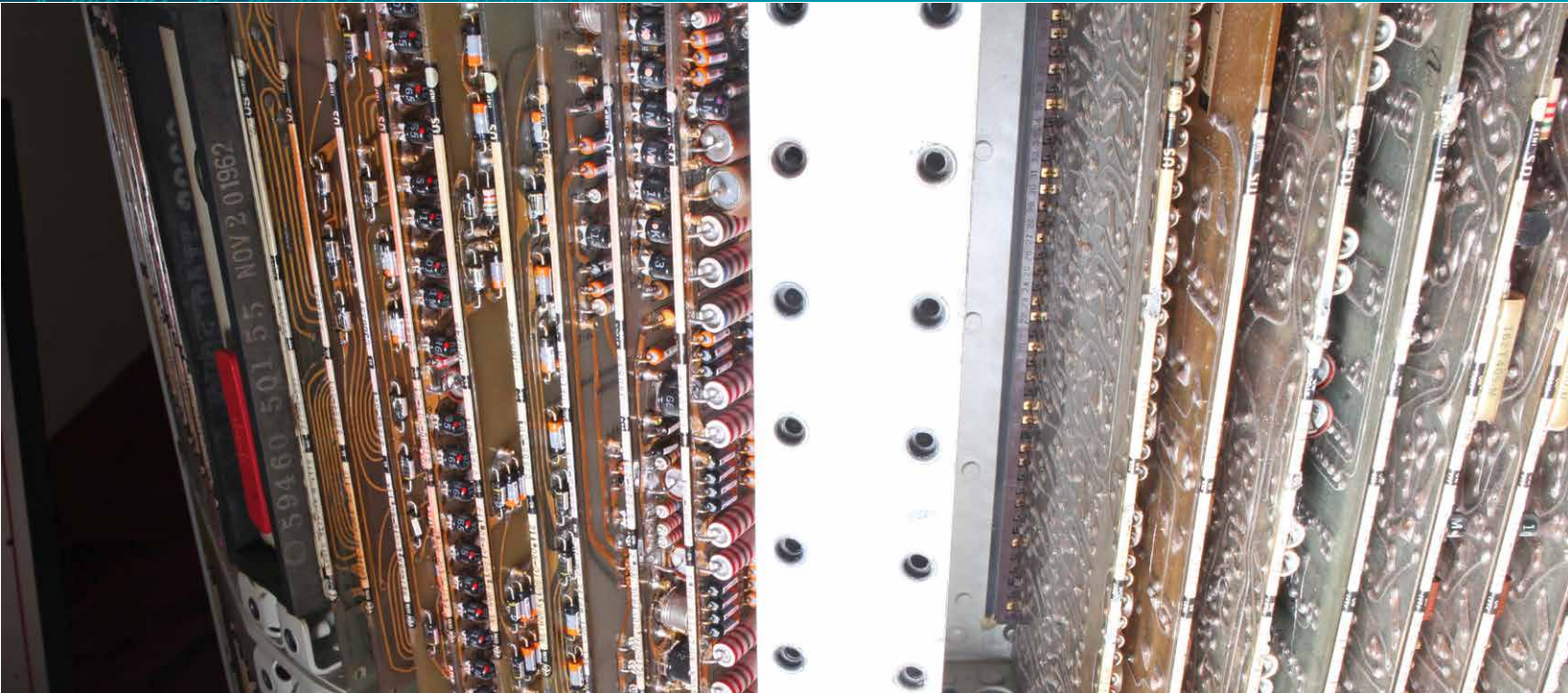
Integrating Vision and Action through Ongoing Evaluation

The ACRM Board and staff understand Strategic Plan evaluation to be a cyclical process of iteration that integrates vision and action through rigorous examination of the annual Implementation Plan. By assessing progress towards goals on a quarterly basis, the museum is continuously positioned to understand successes and challenges, and pursue flexible, evidence-based responses.

Evaluation is framed as a series of key questions that serve to measure progress towards institutional goals:

- What did we do well over the past quarter? What challenges did we face?
- Are the assumptions on which our plan is based still sound?
- How close did we come to meeting the performance targets and timelines outlined in the Implementation Plan?
- If we deviated from these targets and timelines, was this a fault of the plan? A failure to realistically estimate organizational capacity? The result of external forces?
- Are our current processes the most effective means of achieving these targets and timelines?
- Are we asking the right questions and collecting the right data in order to accurately measure our progress towards goals?
- Are there new opportunities on the horizon towards to which we should allocate resources?
- Are our competitors shifting their missions or activities in ways that might impact ours? Are there new competitors in our space?
- Should we shift our activities over the coming quarter or our priorities over the coming year in light of these issues?
- How can our monitoring and evaluation strategies be improved or altered to more accurately inform future planning efforts?

Answering these and other, related evaluation questions on a regular, ongoing basis will both facilitate the museum's successful progress towards Strategic Goals and guide future revisions and updates to the Strategic Plan.



Planning Beyond 2022

The ACRM Board of Directors will reconvene in Bozeman in 2022 for a Strategic Planning retreat at which the museum's progress over the previous three years will be evaluated and analyzed. New goals for the next three-to-five year Plan period will be established, and will include specific activities in support of the museum's intention to identify or construct a permanent facility.

Minuteman Missile Guidance Computer,
ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo



Model K binary adder built by Dr. George Stibitz, ACRM Collection
Shawn Raecke photo

Contact Information

To learn more about this Strategic Plan,
to make a donation to the museum,
or to inquire about joining our Board of Directors,
please contact:

Eleanor Barker, Executive Director
eleanor.barker@acrmuseum.org

or

Barbara Keremedjiev, Board President
barbara@acrmuseum.org