Stelo

Strategic Planning

2021-2024
This document tells the story of who we are, who we serve, what our goals are, and where we plan to go. We hope that it deepens our relationships and establishes a path towards greater clarity and accountability for our work.
Our Guiding Purpose

Stelo illuminates the power of art to invite conversation and build community. We are dedicated to responsive models of support via partnerships, collaboration, and exchange.
Vision + The Deep Why

We envision a world where creatives are valued for their essential work of shaping our culture and co-creating our futures, where intersectional conversations center around empathy and care, and where arts and cultural producers are embedded in the process of civic engagement.
Embedding Equity + Repair

We are committed to growing our organization in order to share power and co-create an environment that is not only accessible, diverse, equitable, and inclusive but is also actively anti-bias and anti-racist. In 2021 we began using an equity lens to more effectively guide decision making away from known systems of harm and towards a culture of repair. To us, equity means that everyone is cared for. Embedded in that care is an acknowledgment of the different experiences of privilege and oppression in our culture and our community. We also acknowledge the foundational and systemic biases in our organization and throughout society.
Land & People Acknowledgement

The land we occupy is Indigenous homeland. This is the land of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Molalla, Cowlitz, Kalapuya, Chinook, Tualatin, and many other tribes. We ask you to join us in building accountable and respectful relationships with Indigenous people. We honor the plants, water, land and living relations who make their homes here.
**Emergence**
We nurture the creative process as a cycle of becoming. By engaging with a spectrum of creatives and organizers who are deeply committed to courageously growing their artistic and cultural practices, we embrace intuitive and experimental possibilities.

**Community**
Our communal interbeing invites us to listen, share, and respond. Together, we participate in a cycle of exchange that honors and contributes to the interdependence of the ecosphere.

**Curiosity**
We believe that making is an offering to think more deeply and to approach the world with respectful curiosity. We offer access points for artists, staff, and communities to converse, listen, and learn from one another.

**Place**
By advocating for healthier relationships with land and people, we root our work in connection to place. We seek to co-create a sense of place, and of belonging, with the creatives we support, our neighbors, our partners, and our peers.

**Constellation of Values**

**Care**
We embrace radical love that recognizes our individual and collective lived experiences. We center care in our interactions to foster inclusive, intersectional, and equitable spaces.
Goals

The following lists introduce the major goals and objectives we are currently working towards, and aim to achieve in the coming three years. We will discuss these goals in greater detail in the programs section of this document. The list of goals intentionally decreases incrementally each year, leaving room for future co-creators to help shape emergent goals and programs. We hope that sharing them here at the beginning of this story provides greater clarity around where we are placing our efforts.
2021: Emerging + Caring

- Introduce our new identity and values via programs and communications.
- Form a paid advisory council to co-create the future of our programming.
- Engage in facilitated equity building workshops and conversations, establishing an ongoing learning process that leads to action.
- Using an equity lens, evaluate current and past residency + public programs, creating a timeline for what will remain, what will evolve, and what will be retired.
- Plant a dye and fiber garden at Camp Colton in collaboration with community partners and artists.
- Re-engage programming in our downtown Portland space. We will honor + share the work from creatives whose exhibitions and programs were postponed in 2020, while co-planning new initiatives with our Advisory Council.
- Create a LOI and jury process for our partner, storefront and project residencies that centers equity and access.
- Launch a publishing program to support our residencies in an expanded capacity, to respond to artists needs, and to explore earned income potentials.
- Expand core leadership team and continue to clarify staff’s individual skills, interests, and responsibilities, as well as shared roles and collaborative work processes.
- Develop and launch an online shop to better support creatives in residence, offer more community engagement, and create an income stream to support public program costs.
- Commit to raising artist honorariums to equalize artist wages with staff wages, which will be accomplished through budget restructuring and potential grant support.
- Develop accountability rubric for our internal team and the partners we engage with, which holds us accountable to our co-workers, collaborators, the artists/creatives we serve, and the community.
- Deepen alumni relationships + support by creating alumni driven programming and sharing news from their creative practices.
- Evaluate + update our spaces to be accessible and comfortable for people with disabilities.
- Develop an annual report-back document that focuses on transparency around what we did, how we did, where we fell short, and what went well.
- Introduce new local core residency awardee with a focus on relationship building within our intersectional communities.
2022: Communing + Placemaking

• Create a research + metrics process with the Advisory Council to consider the potential for becoming a public charity.

• Launch membership program to grow our community engagement options.

• Begin a workshop program, utilizing + sharing the skills and knowledge from our staff, partners, and creative community.

• Present plan for curation of programs at Park Block that is co-created with our Advisory Council.

• Introduce new core residency awardee.

• Introduce a participatory budgeting process for working with artists and partners, with the aim of giving artists more economic autonomy.

• Develop and launch an online shop to better support creatives in residence, offer more community engagement, and create an income stream to support public program costs.

2023: Inquiring

• Review potential to become a public charity in 2024.
About Us

Where we have been
Established in 2012 as c3:initiative, the organization was founded by Shir Ly Grisanti as a way to engage in philanthropic and nonprofit work via a small family foundation. The organization is set up as a Private Operating Foundation (POF), Public Benefit 501(c)(3) nonprofit. This means that we are funded like a family foundation, but rather than offer grants, we are required to spend our funds on charitable programs, like a traditional nonprofit. We chose this structure because we believe in solidarity rather than charity.

c3:initiative was founded with the intention of creating a largely self-sustaining vehicle for supporting creativity, healing, and innovation. We are an immigrant founded endeavor, informed by values and world-views that stem from the generational and lived experiences of Jewish Latinx immigrants. Some of our early guiding principles include: community and resource sharing; inquiry and healthy debate; and the general idea to give what you can. These foundational ideas continue to guide how we operate both within our organization, as well as with program participants at all levels.

Since our founding, we have supported artists, culture makers and partners to foster ambitious and thoughtful projects. This endeavor was launched with the vision of creating a space where ideas could be explored in community, a space contextualized by creatives and the creative process, where art and its often discursive process are made accessible and used as a springboard for dialog. Additionally, we aimed to reduce some factors that can hinder a project’s full potential by providing financial support, administrative labor, and community in-roads. Over the past nine years, we enacted that vision by working with over 100 artists and collectives, and partnering with over 20 local groups and organizations to amplify their voices and to broaden the conversations elicited by their work.

We have experimented with a variety of artist residency models, including: both invitational formats and calls for applications; week to month-long residencies for focused time and continuity; low-residency and durational relationships that span years of collaboration; some programs offer technical skills sharing and studio access; others prioritize relationship building intended to catalyze a new project in response to community and place. We enter all of our residency relationships with an aim to be adaptive and responsive to artists’ needs.

Image: Canyon Creek at Camp Colton
Photo: Rory Sparks
Embracing Change

Our last strategic plan concluded in 2019. Since then, a thread that has woven itself through our planning, dreaming and acting, is change. As we re-engaged in strategic planning, 2020 amplified the need to re-align to meet each moment, responding to timely projects and practices. In holding a space for both loss and renewal, we endeavor to support creatives to co-imagine new possibilities. How can we continue to create spaces where intuition and lived experiences are valued? What might be possible through creativity? We humbly seek ways to be present and support the now and the tomorrow of arts and culture.
Where We Are Now

While c3:initiative was founded with the intention of supporting various not-for-profit endeavours, we began by developing a robust program to support artistic practice. We are excited to name this arts initiative Stelo. In becoming Stelo we move into the flow of change. This re-alignment is intended to re-center, clarify, and connect with our future potential.

Stelo is defined as star in Esperanto, and stem in Italian. This name brings us in closer relationship to the natural world. Stars live beyond human reach and encourage us to dream about what might be. Stems nurture new growth and ground us in what is. How can we learn from land, air, water, plants, animals and humans in order to better live our values? Being in healthier relation to place and people, we are inspired to illuminate the power of art to invite conversation and build community.

Although our name is changing, our connection to the founding identity of c3:initiative will continue for the time being, with c3 acting as an umbrella organization. c3:initiative will oversee any projects and partnerships of interest to the family foundation which are outside of the scope of Stelo’s purpose and vision.
A Bridge Year

2019 was the culminating year of our last strategic plan, in which we aimed to be positioned to open a “center for critical conversation” in an urban site in Portland, Oregon, and to offer more defined programs at our rural site in Colton, Oregon. In a moment that saw the closure of many art spaces, including schools, museums and alternative spaces, throughout the region and the country, we felt proud to secure an urban location for the arts community in the heart of the city, owned and operated by the nonprofit.

In beginning to reimagine what this new space could offer and what our next three to five years might look like, the world turned upside down as we entered a jarring 2020. Around the globe, we collectively closed our doors in an act of community care during a global pandemic. In the US, we were thrust into a collective reckoning with racial injustice and ongoing systemic oppressions. Internally, our conversations focused on caring for each other and for our community, as we navigated the moment, recognizing that we needed to do internal work in order to create an organizational structure and environment that could be a truly intersectional space.

2021 is a bridge year wherein we commit to centering equity from the top down, nurturing relationships that focus on co-creation and reciprocity, and learning about and implementing disability justice.
Centering Equity from the Top Down

Our staff has intuitively gravitated toward a co-leadership model over the past year and we are working towards redefining our roles while maintaining the purposefully blurry overlaps. In reimagining how we work as a team, we aim to increase the agility and resilience of our organization.

As we work to dismantle the foundational white supremecist culture of our society, we must expand and evolve. We each have our own stories, personal and ancestral, which shape the values and assumptions that we bring to the table. We will de-center the white bodied privilege that currently exists in our organization as a priority in 2021, building a more resilient and caring community.

As we shape and examine the efficacy of existing programs, and dream of what might be, we are considering how audiences and artists engage with our offerings. There is a clear need to expand upon the limited lived experiences reflected in and represented by our staff. With a goal of growing deep roots and honoring various ways of knowing in our community, we are developing a paid Advisory Council that will serve alongside our program staff to help inform dreaming, planning, and decision-making.
Nurturing Relationships + Partnerships

Over the next three years, we will reimagine what it means to be in partnership with other organizations. We will build support structures that consider mutuality and continual adaptability, in which each and every identity is nurtured through a relationship with the other.

We believe in peer-to-peer support as a means of resource sharing. In past partnerships we have collaborated with fellow arts orgs and cultural spaces to house their visiting artists, and provided studio and public programming space for free or reduced cost. In 2021 we are using an equity lens to think through who has been supported via our partnerships and who we will prioritize moving forward. Using the frameworks of solidarity and gift economies we will create a process for potential partners to transparently engage in mutual support.
Building Relationships With The Local Indigenous Community

We are committed to co-create programs and actions that fully embody a commitment to Indigenous rights and cultural equity, centering the land from which we program.

We can be held accountable to:
- Be in relationship with the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
- Co-create partnered programs with peer and community solidarity in mind
- Have representation of Indigenous creatives on our Advisory Council
- Listen and connect with issues being raised by Indigenous communities, making space within our programming to support artists exploring these issues
- Return any Indigenous artifacts found at Camp Colton to the Grand Ronde Tribes

Understanding And Implementing Disability Justice

As we determine how to move forward on renovating and re-activating our spaces in both our urban and rural locations, we will be learning about the experiences and needs of people with disabilities, considering intersectionality, accessibility differences, and how to communicate responsibly about accommodating divergent needs.
Who We Are

Creatives/artists We Serve
Of the 104 artists we have supported 61% were local to Oregon when we engaged with them, and the remaining 39% travelled from their home bases of Spain, California, New Mexico, New York, Texas, Montana, Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Washington, and Alabama. This group includes multi-disciplinary makers, painters, poets, sculptors, photographers, performers, musicians, papermakers, social practice practitioners, writers, eco-activists, audio artists, ceramicists, video/media artists, individual makers and collaborative groups. They were invited, selected via open calls, and recommended to us via partner orgs. They are students, emerging artists, mid-career, and established creatives. The common thread across this community is that they are all deeply committed to their creative practice.

The primary way we engage with artists is through our residency programming. Looking back at our previous three years from 2018-2020 we served 67 artists in residence, with 30 of these artists identifying as BIPOC. Looking ahead to our next three years we will continue to refine our nomination, application, and jury processes for our residency programs to center equity. Supporting artists is the heart of our work. In our re-alignment as Stelo we are identifying ways we can continue to be responsive to artists’ needs.
Shir Ly Camin Grisanti | Founding Director, c3:initiative + Outgoing Co-Leader, Stelo
Shir Grisanti is a mother, a feminist business-woman, and a rewilding land steward. A German-Jewish Latinx/Israeli immigrant, Shir founded the arts nonprofit c3:initiative (now Stelo) to support the production of art while facilitating community engagement between individual artists, arts and cultural institutions, and the public. Her work is guided by the philosophy that society moves toward greater social justice through individual growth, collaboration, and community-building.

Rory Sparks | Co-Leader
Rory Sparks engages in a creative practice that merges the roles of artist, administrator, and educator. She has a strong interest in collective thought and arts ecologies, and a background in traditional craft. She is now considering how to use art as a tool to reconnect the hand not only to tradition, but also to the earth and the communities we form, in ways that are relational, responsive, and, ultimately, regenerative. She began working with Stelo Arts in 2018.

Jenn Woodward | Co-Leader
Jenn Woodward (she/her) is a visual artist, educator, and arts worker. Her journey with us began via her artistic practice. From 2014-2016 her community papermaking studio, Pulp + Deckle, was supported by the c3:initiative incubator program. In 2018 Jenn joined our staff to provide administrative support, bringing seven years of employment experience within Portland’s non-profit sector, as well as service on the volunteer boards of Art on Alberta and North American Hand Papermakers. Over the years her role has evolved and she is proud to currently be a co-leader of Stelo. Jenn attended the High School for Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, TX, earned her BFA from Sarah Lawrence College, and her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in 2006. Jenn is passionate about lifelong learning, supporting art and artists, and contributing towards environmental and social justice.

Neal Fegan | Camp Colton Sculpture Studio Lead
Neal Fegan is the Sculpture Studio Manager at Camp Colton. He considers sculpture as anything from large, welded, steel structures to soft cookie dough, which he generously shares from the Camp kitchen. Dichotomies like peace and playfulness, stability and awkwardness, comfort and utility, solitude and togetherness have always been important to his practice. He seeks connection through collaboration, food, and play with the ultimate motivation of making people smile. He joined the Stelo staff in 2015.

Stacey Tomanelli | Administrative Lead
Stacey Tomanelli joined the creative team of Stelo and sister organization Camp Colton in June 2018. Since graduating high school Stacey has held a full time job in the administrative field. She received her Bachelor’s Degree in Liberal Studies at SUNY Purchase College while working and attending classes in the evening. She is a mother of two boys and multiple animals. Stacey has always been interested in the arts. Her mother was an artist and she grew up using art as a way of expressing herself. Stacey enjoys working with talented people who inspire her.
Understanding And Implementing Disability Justice

As we determine how to move forward on renovating and re-activating our spaces in both our urban and rural locations, we will be learning about the experiences and needs of people with disabilities, considering intersectionality, accessibility differences, and how to communicate responsibly about accommodating divergent needs.

Stelo Advisory Council

In fall 2021 we are building a paid advisory council that will join our programmatic staff. This group of 6-8 individuals will be unified by a dedication to arts, culture, and their intersections in the Portland community. Our interest is in co-creating programs designed through an expanded, intersectional lens. Relationship building will be a key component of the council.

Stelo Board Of Directors

Shir Ly Camin Grisanti | Founder and Board Chair
Shir Grisanti is a mother, a feminist business-woman, and a rewilding land steward. A German-Jewish Latinx/Israeli immigrant, Shir founded the arts nonprofit c3:initiative (now Stelo) to support the production of art while facilitating community engagement between individual artists, arts and cultural institutions, and the public. Her work is guided by the philosophy that society moves toward greater social justice through individual growth, collaboration, and community-building.

Laurence Grisanti | Secretary
Laurence Grisanti is a father, a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, and a co-director of Camp Colton. “I believe that the process of healing, returning to a state of balance and harmony, is a goal for everyone. The combination of psychiatric medication and psychotherapy is a powerful treatment process that can improve your mental wellness and help you feel better.”

Tony Grisanti | Treasurer
As a seasoned accounting professional, Tony was chief financial officer for 35 years at Netsmart Technologies, Inc, before retiring in April 2013. He now serves as a Board Member. While at Netsmart, Tony’s responsibilities included oversight of the budget process and financial forecasting, in addition to strategic, tax and cash flow planning. He also led audit and lender relations. During his tenure, he facilitated Netsmart’s transition to a public company on NASDAQ through interactions with the Securities and Exchange Commission, market makers and auditors. He later managed the company’s sale to private investors. Tony is a certified public accountant and graduated from Pace University in New York with a bachelor’s degree in public accounting.

Monica S. Camin
Monica S. Camin is an Argentine born, New Jersey and Texas-based artist. Within her artwork, Camin expresses her experience of cultural hybridity. Her paintings, sculptures, installations, and works on fabric record an attempt to reconnect to roots torn from their origins; they explore the space where the deeply personal overlaps with the collective experience; they emerge from the emotional labor of processing how to transform inherited trauma into productive participation. Camin serves as an Advisory Board member of the Neo-Latino collective, a group of artists dedicated to creating space for the contemporary Latinx voice in the US arts landscape, and is a founding Board Member of c3:initiative, a non-profit art space in Portland, Oregon committed to process-based exploration.

Carlos Camin
Carlos Camin is the retired Founder of Camin Cargo Control, Inc. In June 2013, Camin Cargo Control was honored by Hispanic Business in its selection of “Top 500 Hispanic Businesses.” The company ranked in the Top 100 (#83) for the second year in a row. Over the span of 30 years of Carlos’s leadership, the Company grew from a one office operation in New York to a highly profitable organization with 550 employees and 43 locations spanning the United States, the Caribbean and Latin America. Carlos was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he studied Chemistry.
Where We Are

Just as Stelo inhabits a constellation of values, we also work within a constellation of places. We seek deeper engagement and connection to place, and are cultivating healthier relationships with the land and those who have tended it; human and more than human.

This constellation includes an urban campus called Park Block, a rural campus called Camp Colton, and the programming itself which floats between the two, is called Stelo. Each of the campuses has a unique identity which offers different modes of engagement for Stelo. We see Stelo as immaterial, decentralized, and grounding itself in the places it engages. We are creating spaces where there are many access points to entry, with Stelo serving as the welcome mat, creatively re-thinking how we connect to place.

Within our metaphor of stars and stems, Camp Colton and Park Block are stems taking root in place, and Stelo is the star shining ethereally above the two.

Image: my ancestors will not let me forget this by Demian DinéYazhí, 2020
Photo: Rory Sparks
In July of 2015, the Camin Grisanti family acquired a 60 acre property with the intention of conserving wilderness and expanding c3:initiative programming beyond the urban center. In 2019 an adjacent 25 acres were annexed, preserving the forest from clear-cut. In order to sustain itself, this campus operates as an event and gathering venue which coexists with Stelo's non-profit cultural programming.

In June of 2019, we made a decision to secure space for the arts in a changing landscape by purchasing our downtown location, Park Block at 412 NW 8th Avenue, on the North Park Blocks and in the summer of 2020 we also purchased a living space directly above.

This neighborhood is about to experience a major transition. Portland’s Broadway Corridor Project, one block north of our new location, is envisioned as a unique, diverse, vibrant, sustainable, mixed-use, dense urban district seamlessly integrated with a regional multi-modal transportation hub. In addition, Portland Parks & Recreation is allocating $8 million in funding towards extending the North Park Blocks. The project will transform a City-owned parking lot next to the Pacific NW College of Art into a new public green space. The endeavor aligns with the larger Broadway Corridor project. We are aware of the complex repercussions of urban redevelopment and recognize the need to participate in co-creating a healthy and caring neighborhood for everyone.
Neighbors

Our neighbors are bright points of orientation in our neighborhoods. Across the street from our Portland location is a vibrant and bustling green space that encourages community gathering and connection to nature. At Park Block, we are in good company amidst many arts and culture organizations. Some we already have relationships with, and some we are eager to form. We also have many houseless neighbors, and are considering what it means to be a good neighbor to everyone. We include our houseless neighbors in our equity lens, and are committed to working with outreach organizations in our neighborhood such as p:ear, Central City Concern, and Bud Clark Commons, who support those experiencing houselessness.

At Camp Colton, we are planning public programming as a way to engage with our community through gardens, workshops, and events. We are also prioritizing, and looking forward to forming relationships with the Molalla and Kalapuya communities in the region.

Urban + Rural

There are two ways to use the bright stars to orient oneself, and like practically everything else in the universe, the two ways tend to merge. As we explore what it might mean to connect the urban and rural, we begin programming at our Camp Colton campus. Our cross-programming is founded in mutual inquiry, which brings an urban/rural exchange to this conversation. We look forward to starting conversations with the Grand Ronde Tribal Community as well as our immediate neighbors nested within the unincorporated community of Colton.
Programs

We view programming as a co-creational activity that inspires a whole field of possibility. Stelo is a living organism that remains responsive to our collective experience. Artists have enriched our programming through conversations concerning the prison industrial complex, gentrification, climate destruction, Indigenous futures, Black ecologies, and many other pressing matters in our time.

In the next three years, we will be building upon our program offerings guided by our core values. In early 2021, we will begin to publicly present our process of realignment with a series of programs which take into consideration our current moment. We consider our values as fixed points for navigating through the next three years: Emergence, Community, Care, Curiosity, and Place.

As we begin to inhabit our renovated downtown space, we will continue to nurture a welcoming environment that creates spaces where there are many access points to entry for engaging with art and artists. We endeavor to put cultural leadership in a place of power by assembling our advisory council and stepping out of the way as an action to help facilitate possibility. Generous, reciprocal relationships will form by shifting from “power over” to “power with” dynamics.

Image: Alejandra Arias Sevilla, print resident, 2021
Photo: Rory Sparks
Realignment
Our first major series of programming will be a roll-out of our new identity & strategic thinking. We have a plan to gradually enter the physical space by exploring the permeable boundaries as layers leading us in: we will begin with a window project illustrating our 5 values envisioned by 5 artists, and eventually a gathering inside.

Pedagogy
In addition to, and as a part of developing workshops, we will begin exploring pedagogy with the consideration of DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility). We hope to coordinate with other cultural organizations to do this work together, in conversation, with many skilled leaders. Approaching with curiosity offers inlets to listen, learn, and re-learn from one another. We hold humility and receptivity as a way of being.

Publishing
With the creation of Stelo Press, we are eager to begin publishing efforts in-house, including artist editions, books, and creating catalogs for major exhibitions. We will begin to explore publishing as a form of earned income and ways to expand our reach to communities outside of Portland. As we experience transformation in our society, we recognize how artists nourish emergent conversations. It is in these conversations that we find co-creation of culture.
Residencies
We nurture relationships within the community that support the artists’ experience. While we continue to find ways to strengthen our current residencies, we are also looking forward to forming new residencies. Responsiveness is crucial to both. We believe generosity exists in exchanges, which creates a ripple of interconnected relationships.

Food & Care
With the addition of the new apartment residency space within our downtown location as well as the commercial kitchen at Camp Colton, we will think about food, domestic labor, nourishment, nurturing, plants, feminist politics, politics of home and hospitality as entry points into using these spaces. We embrace radical love and center care in our interactions to cultivate a regenerative space of creation and renewal.

Earned Income
We will explore ways to create streams of earned income such as publication, rental, memberships, workshops, and a small sales gallery. It is important that all of these areas feel beneficial to our community and offer reciprocal engagement.
Where We Are Going
How We Might Get There

Accountability
We will put processes in place for how we will be accountable together and to each other. We will do this by creating a tool for assessment to help our co-leaders in their interprofessional collaborative experience which will include role clarification, team functioning, conflict transformation, and family/community care. We are interested in taking active accountability for our own capacity by finding the right scale for our team. We will create an agreement for checking to see if we’ve hit our marks, and consider how we shift the thinking process of accountability as always being framed as punishment. What are more equitable and caring alternatives for evaluation? We will use this agreement internally to grow our working relationships, and externally to deepen our relationships with our artists, neighbors, and partners.

At the end of 2021 we will begin reporting out an annual look back at our goals for the year and how we are accountable to them. This process will encourage us to seek clarity and balance to best move our work forward.
Finances 2021-2023

Our structure + what it means

c3: initiative is a Private Operating Foundation (POF), Public Benefit 501(c)(3) non-profit. This unique structure was chosen by the Camin and Grisanti families to establish a kind of hybrid between a foundation and a non-profit organization. The families came together to pool their expertise and experiences forming the Board of Directors and establishing an endowment fund. As a POF, we direct at least 85% of our income, and often more, to our values based mission. The flexibility of this structure has enabled us to primarily self fund our expenses, not relying on public donations or external grants for the majority of our work.

As Stelo continues to evolve we will evaluate the need to expand beyond our endowment, asking questions about our roles within both nonprofit and philanthropic communities. Traditionally, nonprofits seek to establish themselves in perpetuity. Over the next three years we will discuss the ramifications of this type of thinking, looking at ways we can best meet our goals while exploring alternative potentials. Spending down our endowment over time is one possibility. Evolving into a public non-profit is another. We will make these decisions in community with the artists and partners we serve.

Transparency + Budget Snapshot

Working with a stable endowment is a privilege we want to honor through thoughtful management and allocation of expenses. Our overall 2020 budget was near $515,000. This breaks down into the following areas of expense.
The 2020 Program Budget

In 2019 and 2020 we purchased our downtown Portland space, as well as a condo space in the same mixed-use building. These one-time additional expenses are not reflected in our annual budget above, but they do impact the overall size of c3:initiative’s endowment. In 2020-21 we are using our equity lens to re-envision renovating these spaces to better meet the long term goals of our artists and community.

Once these financial investments in our spaces are completed we will shift our 2022 budget to focus on increasing programming funds with the goal of providing more robust and equitable artist honorariums and stipends, and offering free and/or low cost programmatic space to creatives and partners.

In 2023 our budget will be built around the lessons synthesized from the previous two years of operating in our new spaces.
Breakdown of Program Costs

- Administrative Support: 15.6% ($247,000)
- Direct Costs: 13.2% ($55,000)
- Facilities + Utilities + Insurance: 11.0% ($46,000)
- Health Benefits: 10.0% ($41,710)
- Legal + Accounting: 6.2% ($26,000)
- Community/Member Dues + Professional Development: 0.3% ($1,400)
Breakdown of Direct Costs

- Artist Payments + Travel/Meal/Material Stipends: 43.6% $24,000
- Program Support (materials, cleaning, shared meals, etc): 50.4% $27,700
- COVID-19 Community Relief Fund: 3.6% $2,000
- Equity Funding: 2.4% $1,300

Total Direct Costs: $55,000
**Gratitude + Action**

2021 is a year of realignment for our organization. We are intentionally leaving room for the unknown as a way to move into our next phase via co-creation. During this bridge year we are adapting to make room for transformation.

Thank you, reader, for taking the time to get to know Stelo. In creating this plan we seek to pull back the operational curtain and connect with you more deeply. We welcome comments, questions and suggestions that arise. Visit our website to connect.

It is a gift to do this work in the arts and culture sphere. Stelo is an organization, and an organization is made up of people. The support network we form helps us be better together - better humans, administrators, and neighbors. Much gratitude to the creatives, partners, collaborators, and team members who give us purpose.