



ADVISORY  
BOARD  
for the ARTS

*Transforming Arts Organizations Worldwide*

## Finding Your Shared Purpose

*Interactive Member Workshop Series*

# Process Outline

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# Session 1: Team Overview of Shared Purpose

**Objective:** provide a solid understanding of the Shared Purpose framework across the team

In this session, we'll share the core teachings and key takeaways from our research on the power of a Shared Purpose with your broader cross-functional team including:

- The power of Shared Purpose to drive loyalty, especially with casual attenders
- The five key elements of a Shared Purpose: higher order, emotional, relevant, credible, and differentiated.
- The difference between Shared Purpose and your organization's mission, vision, values, and strategy.
- Instantiating a Shared Purposed across touchpoints.



**Length**

1.5 hours



**Pre-Work**

Review the ABA  
Shared Purpose  
primer



**Output**

Guide to leveraging a  
Shared Purpose at  
your organization

This session is less interactive than the others, however there is ample opportunity for Q&A throughout the presentation.

# Session 2: Identifying Potential Higher Order Values

**Objective:** identify values your organization can stand for, beyond the art form

In this session, we'll explore the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET), which is a tool to surface the *emotional connection* your organization can have with audiences.

We will then conduct our own ZMET exercise to identify potential themes for our own Shared Purpose.

In breakout groups, we will use the output from our ZMET exercise to brainstorm a set of Shared Purpose statements, which we will continue to pressure test in the subsequent workshops.



**Length**

2 hours



**Pre-Work**

Prepare an image for the ZMET exercise



**Output**

Recap of team ZMET exercise, including images and quotes

# Session 2: Workshop on Identifying Potential Higher Order Values

## SESSION AGENDA

Time	Topic Covered
30 mins	Review of Shared Purpose and the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET)
45 mins	Group ZMET exercise, sharing the images we have prepared in advance and discussing the organization-defining themes that emerge
30 mins	Breakout rooms to brainstorm possible higher order values based on our ZMET exercise
15 mins	Voting on two higher order values to continue to pressure test in Workshops 3 & 4

# Session 3: Values Assessment – Your Organization

**Objective: pressure test our potential higher order values for credibility and differentiation**

In this session, we'll start look inward at the unique gifts that your organization authentically offers the world.

We will select two potential higher order values and conduct two pressure testing exercises:

- **Credibility Test:** Examining your past productions and exhibitions, events, marketing, community engagement, and more to evaluate how well your organization has embodied potential values in the past.
- **Differentiation Screen:** Assessing potential values against what other arts organizations in your genre and geography might offer.



**Length**

1.5 hours



**Pre-Work**

Prepare an example of another organization that shares your value



**Output**

Internal strength matrix and steps for improvement

# Session 3: Workshop on Values Assessment – Your Organization

## SESSION AGENDA

Time	Topic Covered
15 mins	Revisiting our brainstorming and finalizing our choice of two higher order values to pressure test
30 mins	Deep dive on credibility and how your organization authentically stands for these values – and where you might fall short
30 mins	Deep dive on differentiation and how you offer opportunities for audiences to connect with your shared purpose in a way that is unique from other institutions
15 mins	Preparing for audience research

# Session 4: Values Assessment – Your Audience

**Objective:** pressure test our potential higher order values for emotional resonance and relevance

While we start with the internal values the organization already holds, the real magic of Shared Values comes from attaching those ideas to audience aspirations.

In this workshop we'll focus on your audiences' higher order emotional needs and points of tension and identifying the ones you can help fulfill via your art. Exercises will include:

- Tension Test: Brainstorming tensions you can help audiences resolve.
- Relevance Screen: Examining potential values for connections to audience members' lives outside the arts.



**Length**

2 hours



**Pre-Work**

Conduct audience research\*



**Output**

2-3 potential values to turn into Shared Purpose statements

*\*ABA resources and guidance provided*



# Session 4: Workshop on Values Assessment – Your Audience

## SESSION AGENDA

Time	Topic Covered
45 mins	Review of audience research completed by organization: how would our audiences benefit from the two possible shared purpose statements we have identified?
30 mins	Deep dive on emotional resonance and how your purpose can help resolve your audience's emotional tensions and anxieties
30 mins	Deep dive on relevance and how your purpose can connect to audience members' lives outside of the arts
15 mins	Wrapping up our group Shared Purpose journey: where do we go from here?