Theatre Forward


This report represents Theatre Forward's responses to Charting Impact, a joint project of BBB Wise Giving Alliance, GuideStar USA Inc, and Independent Sector. Charting Impact uses five simple yet powerful questions to encourage strategic thinking and help organizations share concise information about their plans and progress toward impact.

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Mission:
Theatre Forward is devoted to advancing the American theatre and its communities by providing funding and other resources to the country's leading nonprofit theatres. Through this network of regional theatres and funders, partnerships for artistic, education and other programs are incubated, tested and disseminated. From its base in New York, Theatre Forward aims to increase access and opportunity for all to experience theatre that builds community and sets the stage for individual achievement by advancing strong theatre and educating through theatre.

The content of this Charting Impact Report is the sole product and responsibility of Theatre Forward. This report does not in any way represent an endorsement from Independent Sector, BBB Wise Giving Alliance, or GuideStar, nor does it represent fulfillment of the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability. For more information on Charting Impact, visit www.guidestar.org/chartingimpact
1. What are we aiming to accomplish?

Today's enormously challenging operating environment for theatres and companies alike pose opportunities for mutual support and collaboration. Our communities and our workforce need the inspiration and education our theatres offer. Our theatres themselves are weathering challenges of historic proportions, yet they are creating theatre of unique excellence. Wherever a corporation can engage with a theatre, whether through philanthropy, sponsorship, board membership, education, or employee engagement, Theatre Forward is a bridge to lively and productive partnerships that keep America creative.

2. What are our strategies for making this happen?

To carry out this mission, Theatre Forward is focusing on three major programs: 1. Educating Through Theatre: We help theatres improve the lives and careers of countless students and adults each year through the inspiration and unique skills of theatre. At-risk youth, English Language Learners, children in poverty, families in social service agencies, and lower income citizens are among the ultimate beneficiaries of these programs. 2. Advancing Strong Theatre: We support artistic projects enhancing our theatres commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for targeted underserved and under-represented communities. 3. Annual Fund: Theatre Forward responds to our theatres' needs and therefore the needs of their communities to achieve impact beyond what a single theatre can do independently. We provide funding through our Annual Fund giving program,

3. What are our organization's capabilities for doing this?

Theatre Forward theatres contribute to our creative and cultural life - benefitting local communities, children, employees and the economy. Productions they originated have transferred to New York and other theatres, and have won dozens of Tony Awards and Pulitzer Prizes. They enrich lives of the local residents who enjoy their performances, provide creative opportunities for distinguished and emerging performers, serve as incubators for new works, and serve over 500,000 children through their theatre education programs, most from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

4. How will we know if we're making progress?

Theatre Forward is a not-for-profit association dedicated to sustaining America's finest not-for-profit theatres, on the stage and in the community through innovative partnerships with companies, individuals and artists. From its base in New York, Theatre Forward provides a national vehicle for the flow of theatre, collaboration and ideas to and from key national markets. Through support of Theatre Forward, our partners keep American theatre alive by funding theatre education programs, artistic programs and theatre infrastructure. For example in our Corporate Annual Fund, Theatre Forward harnesses individual and corporate expertise in arts and business to provide cooperative assistance and pioneering media and sponsorship projects at theatres. Conversely, it engages corporate employees and clients with theatre across the country in unique and innovative ways. Together, Theatre Forward serves theatres and companies, a win-win partnership focusing on shared values and creativity.

5. What have and haven't we accomplished so far?

Since 1978, Theatre Forward has generated millions of dollars for its founding theatres. In many cases, Theatre Forward is among the largest cumulative donors to these theatres, and ranks among the top 10 corporate donors at most. These critical
distributions are funded by comprehensive corporate partnerships of long standing. To date we have raised over $60 million from nearly 100 companies and foundations, and hundreds of generous individuals. We have funded major theatre education programs including Staging Success (supported by AT&T) and Impact Creativity. We continue to contribute to the development of many top artists in the industry. We break down barriers for all to experience theatre nationwide. We create over 40 events annually connecting New Yorkers to Broadway and its artists.