



Dunedin Music Society

Connecting Local Communities With Live Music

DMS Strategy 2019

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Executive Summary

The Dunedin Music Society, Inc. (DMS) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization in Florida, USA that was founded in December 2016.

Our mission is summarized in the tagline:

Connecting local communities with live music

We are based in Pinellas County, Florida, and as such our primary activity is in the Tampa Bay area, yet our reach is wherever someone wants to engage in making, performing, listening to, or participating in live music experiences. We strive to enrich lives by encouraging participation in live music as a routine part of life and to facilitate the Tampa Bay area to being a major destination hub for live music.

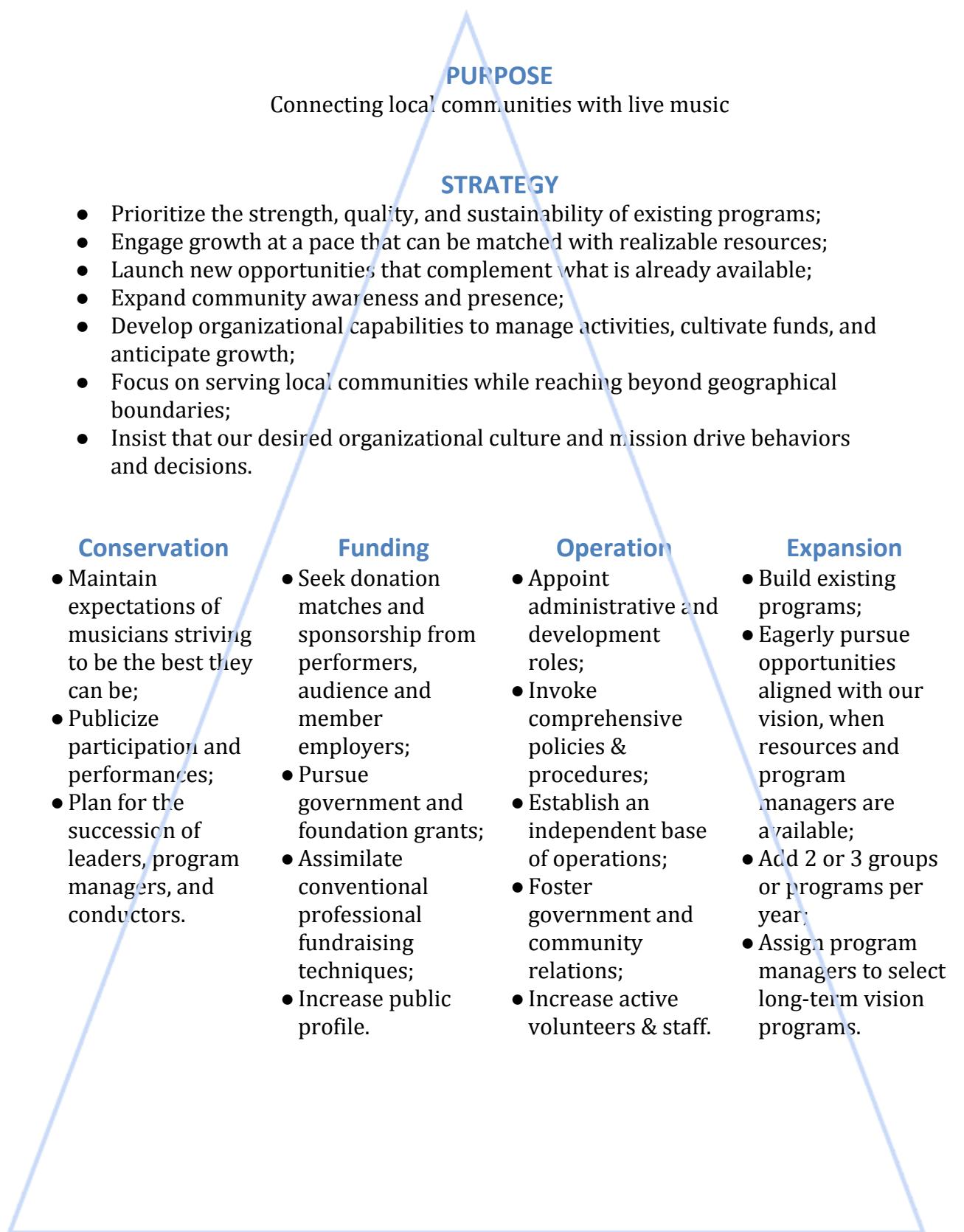
At the time of publication, the DMS has completed its startup phase and has stabilized with a solid foundation. It currently operates several musical groups, produces two major annual musical events, and provides support to unaffiliated musical groups. Strategies have been determined to move the organization to its next milestone on the road to its vision. These strategies align with our mission and are predicated on the DMS behaving according to stated values that shape our desired culture.

There are three primary tenets of the overall strategy:

- To consolidate and continue to strengthen the base offerings already established - We do not want to lose this solid foundation to rapidly chase growth.
- To strengthen the organization's capability and funding that will enable us to successfully grow into our vision.
- To pursue growth toward our vision at a pace that can be supported by realizable resources without sacrificing existing base activities.

The next page is a summary of the DMS strategies for the next one to two years.

Strategy 2019 Pyramid



Introduction

In the period since its inception at the end of 2016, the Dunedin Music Society (DMS) has set its sights on becoming a vehicle to see the Tampa Bay region be a major destination hub for live music, and has established a stable operation that empowers participation in live music-making by performers and audiences of all ages and abilities, without limitation of social identity.

The DMS defines “live music” as a language of emotions mostly generated by natural means free from amplification, which is experienced at a single moment in time.

The operating organization is staffed with a committed group of volunteers, and the DMS boasts a steadily growing membership.

Programs and groups within the DMS umbrella are growing.

To this point in time, building a foundation on the cornerstones of the organization has been the primary focus of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee (see Constitution and Bylaws for specific definitions). Now that the DMS has attained normalcy of operation, the organization is moving its focus towards fully realizing its mission.

This document describes the strategies that the DMS intends to guide activities over the next year or two. It keeps in mind the long-term vision for the organization and lays out the principles that will direct our actions and decisions in the short- and medium-term.

Our Community

The DMS views itself as serving local communities without boundaries.

An event of live music generates a temporary community itself that shares the immediate experience. While originating in Dunedin, Florida, and still considering that our home, we are currently active in communities throughout Pinellas County and consider the broader Tampa Bay area as our center of activity. However, our reach and impact are anywhere in the world we can connect any community with live music.

In the Tampa Bay area, there is reasonable availability of large-scale professional performance of popular music, musical theater, opera, choral and orchestral music. There is also significant availability of amplified popular music large-scale event venues as well as in local restaurants and other establishments.

While there are several community bands and choral groups that provide opportunities for local performers to make music and for local audiences to hear live music, the impact of these are limited to a relatively small populace.

Opportunities to participate in or listen to community orchestral groups, classical ensembles (such as chamber music), new compositions, and alternative presentations as part of a regular life routine are less available.

Our History

In 2014, the City of Dunedin Parks and Recreation Department and Stephen P. Brown, the new director of the Dunedin Concert Band which had been established in 1981, agreed to explore the formation of a 501 (c)(3) organization to take over ownership and management of the group.

The intent of the City was to afford donors the opportunity to make tax-deductible contributions, establish rigorous fiscal accountability, and move management away from the City. They were happy for the organization to have a broader mission as long as their initiating objectives were achieved.

Mr. Brown recruited and led a volunteer task force that spent approximately eighteen months meticulously developing the cornerstone principles and associated documents for the new legal entity, which became incorporated as the Dunedin Music Society in December 2016. The unique name was favored to recognize the important role the City had in the formation of the organization and its continuing support, while not limiting the activities of the group to one ensemble or activity.

In late 2017, full ownership of the Dunedin Concert Band was transferred from the City of Dunedin Parks & Recreation Department and Mr. Brown to the DMS. An agreement between the parties arranges for the DMS to use facilities and significant equipment owned by the City.

In 2018, the DMS started a second group, the Pinellas Community Players, intended for those working on basic instrument skill development.

In 2019, The Rhythm Kings Jazz Orchestra joined the DMS family.

The DMS produces two large-scale annual events: the Holiday Spectacular at the Palladium at St. Petersburg College, and the Pinellas Festival of Community Bands at various locations throughout the county.

Several well attended open workshops for sight-reading concert band music are held each Summer.

In 2019, the DMS will host its first Summer camp for youth.

Financially, the organization is running close to breakeven, though heavily dependent on a volunteer workforce.

Mission and Vision

The mission of the DMS is summarized in the following simple statement of purpose:

Connecting local communities with live music

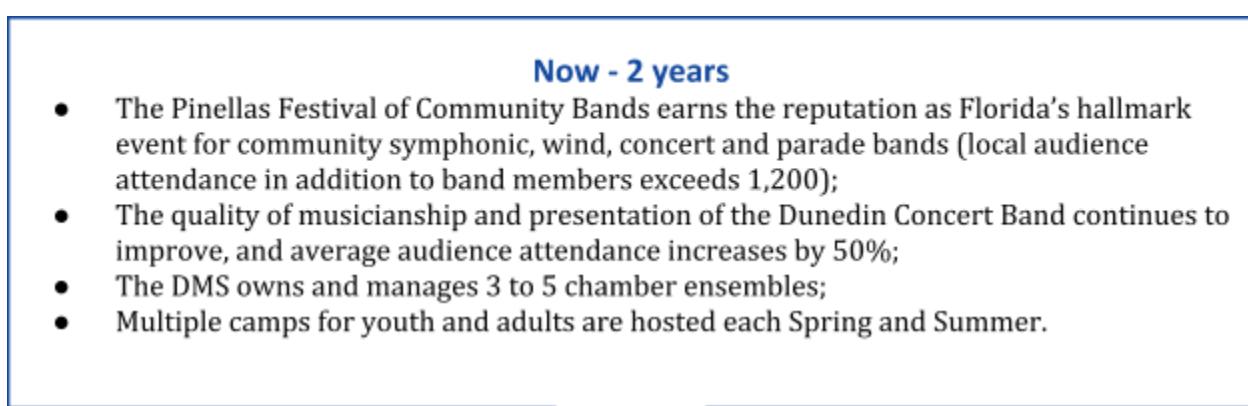
This mission is driven by our underlying belief that live music is the sharing of a momentary and intense natural expression of emotion, enhanced by the uniqueness of all involved, that enriches lives and brings people together.

The mission of the DMS is manifested by:

- Presenting or facilitating live concerts that provide cultural enrichment and entertainment opportunities for audiences of all ages in our area of influence;
- Offering musicians opportunities to participate in affiliated groups for their personal enrichment, education, and performing pleasure, and
- Enabling residents, business owners, and visitors to Tampa Bay to participate in live music as performers and audiences, thereby establishing concert attendance as one of a number of “things to do” any day of the week, any time of the year, alongside dinner, movies, sports, the beach, etc.

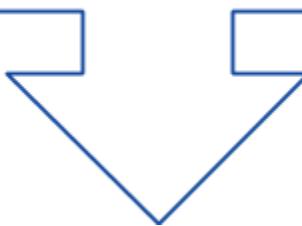
Significant exploration has been undertaken to consider what the future may look like as the DMS journeys on the delivery of its mission.

This flow chart depicts possible enterprises that align with the DMS mission and vision:



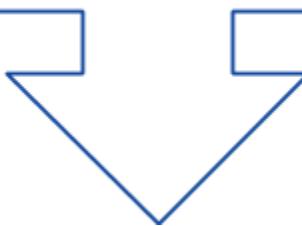
2 - 5 years

- The Pinellas Festival of Community Bands becomes a multi-day event with numerous bands from outside Florida participating;
- The DMS owns and manages an orchestra and a choir;
- Groups and/ or events to support young musicians are piloted to complement local school offerings;
- The DMS is regularly contacted by those seeking opportunities to play or hear live music in the area;
- A second annual festival is hosted and presented;
- The DMS hosts the first “Music in the Community” international conference.



5+ years

- The DMS owns and operates a world-class concert hall that is busy 7 days a week with rehearsals, education, chamber concerts, and large-group concerts;
- There are opportunities for performers and audiences to engage in live music every week near to their residencies throughout Tampa Bay;
- People move to and visit Tampa Bay especially to attend live music events;
- Musicians from all over the globe visit Tampa Bay to perform and learn.



While these endeavors are not necessarily specific goals, they reflect the adventurous and bold future the DMS holds dear.

It is insightful that the DMS is committed to live music becoming a part of the fabric of communities at large, and is just as happy to work with or complement other fearless organizations whose visions are similarly audacious.

We are less about the “DMS,” and more about seeing live music be a prominent part of people’s lives and the culture of our area.

Desired Organizational Culture

The fundamental belief that drives the DMS is that sharing live music experiences enriches lives and society at large. This approach is supported by the following cultural values that form the foundation for our mission-focused behaviors and decisions.

We value bold integrity

We believe practicing bold integrity leads to an organization that is trusted, respected, and viewed as a force for good.

If we are acting on this belief, we will be open and honest both within the organization and with all in the communities we touch.

It also means we will respect our legal requirements, contractual agreements, informal agreements, and the rights of those with whom we interact.

Our financial management will be rigorously responsible and transparent.

We will accept accountability for our mistakes and always strive to improve.

We value quality before quantity

We believe that focusing on quality leads to more meaningful experiences and delivery; quantity follows quality naturally.

This translates to drive for all our musical experiences, for both performers and audiences, to be the best they can be.

It also manifests itself in the drive to continually improve and learn. It is not intended to suggest that only perfection is acceptable or that there is anyone who cannot participate in live music.

This value applies to all our endeavors whether for new musicians or those who are highly-experienced.

It is a value that focuses on intent and effort.

Similarly, the size of the audience is not a driver, but the quality of the audience experience is.

We extend this focus on quality to the running of the organization also.

We believe that quality ensures organization sustainability more than the speed of growth.

We value doing the scary thing

We believe that doing the “scary” thing is necessary to be the best we can be and to make a real impact on others and our communities.

By “scary,” we are referring to doing things that are uncomfortable, different, or not what is expected.

This value manifests itself in bold objectives, challenging ourselves and others, unique approaches, and change.

It also means failing, learning, and improving.

Constructive tension and challenge of the norm is the recipe for progress and change.

We value our Members, Performers, and Audiences

We believe the emotional prowess that music brings to individuals’ lives results from the combined energy of supporters, volunteers, musicians, and listeners.

The DMS is about people and their quality of life.

Everyone can participate and contribute to live music, and we welcome anyone willing to serve the larger community regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, age or other social identities.

- Our Members contribute time, energy and money to enable opportunities for our communities to participate in live music;
- Our Performers choose to share their musical skills and talents that make our world a better place to live;
- Our Audiences encourage our Performers and Volunteers to give their best efforts, as well as introduce their friends, neighbors, colleagues, and families to live music.

We also strive to expose those who do not actively seek participation in live music, so that they too can be amazed by its power.

We value contributing to something greater

We believe that contributing to something greater than ourselves, even something enormously greater, is why we exist and is a great motivation for all.

Living this value leads to realizing our mission in such a way that it enhances the lives of society, our communities, and ourselves, and that it empowers a bold vision for the future.

Strategy 2019

The overriding principles that guide our immediate strategy for the next year or two, are:

- 1) To solidify and extend our existing programs and operational model, thereby establishing a sustainable base for managing opportunistic and strategic growth at a pace that can be matched by the resources required to support growth.

This entails:

- growing organizational capability
- expanding our presence within the community, and
- raising the required funds to support our vision.

- 2) To focus on areas of small and large ensembles in genres that are underrepresented in the local area. In general, we strive not to compete with others that may overlap in the same space but supplement and support them.
- 3) To undertake all these activities in a manner that rigorously supports our desired organizational culture.

The following list of strategies actualize these principles:

- Prioritize the strength, quality, and sustainability of existing programs;
- Engage growth at a pace that can be matched with realizable resources;
- Launch new opportunities that complement what is already available;
- Expand community awareness and presence;
- Develop organizational capabilities to manage activities, cultivate funds, and anticipate growth;
- Focus on serving local communities while reaching beyond geographical boundaries;
- Insist that our desired organizational culture and mission drive behaviors and decisions.

These nuclei are intended to guide our actions over the next year or two, from mid-2019 through the end of 2020.

To support this focus, additional strategic guidance and objectives at an operational level can be manifested as:

- Conservation
- Funding
- Operations
- Expansion

Conservation

Strategy	Examination
Maintain expectations of musicians striving to be the best they can be.	One objective of existing programs is to continually improve. Groups within DMS should not become satisfied or complacent. Such continual striving can be sensed both by Performers and Audiences, and such drive lifts the music into a shared emotional experience rather than merely a delivered product. It also means our groups are continually changing and advancing in sometimes unfamiliar dominions.
Publicize participation and performances.	The DMS continually experiments with ways to better engage Performers, Audiences, and Volunteers, and make its name and culture known. So far, such efforts have helped increase participation in all areas, but there are many additional approaches that can be utilized to enhance community and business support.
Plan for the succession of leaders, program managers, and conductors.	While a number of back-office activities are now sustainable, the majority of current programs and groups are still dependent on a single individual. A plan needs to be developed for maintaining programs and groups for the eventual departure of one person fulfilling several key roles.

Funding

Strategy	Examination
Seek donation matches and sponsorship from performers, audience and member employers.	Ultimately, support from the business community will be needed to financially support our long-term vision. Now is the time to develop relationships and awareness. Also, it is time to enlist donations from early financial supporters in the business community. The business community includes contributions from small local businesses to large companies with a presence in or connection to the region. Support may also be garnered from any other organization that might be aligned with the objectives of the DMS.
Pursue government and foundation grants.	Continue efforts to attain government grants that support the arts. Doing so provides a financial boost, increases visibility and awareness, and adds an element of credibility.
Assimilate conventional professional fundraising techniques.	Build support and awareness by seeking funds for specific concerts, events, or groups. The intent is not to "name" something for a donor, but to acknowledge sponsorship by businesses and perhaps individuals. Requests for contributions from individuals will continue to be "light" to encourage participation (in line with our mission, rather than suggest a financial focus).
Increase public profile.	Coordinate branding as a way for communities to recognize DMS as an organization that is improving life in the area by connecting people with live music, as well as an organization that facilitates others who wish to do the same.

Operation

Strategy	Examination
Appoint administrative and development roles.	The General Director voluntarily shoulders the majority of duties of the Artistic and Executive Directors. The associated workload is unsustainable for the long term and a constraint on all strategic areas for the organization. Attempts to find an individual to assume both the administrative and fundraising elements of the Executive Director role have been unsuccessful. Instead, the DMS has decided to split and staff the role as a matter of urgency. This is critical to driving and realizing progress.
Invoke comprehensive policies & procedures.	The DMS has critical policies and procedures in place that are commensurate with a small organization. In anticipation of continued growth, a more comprehensive set of policies and procedures will enable growth, maintain functional efficiency, and permit business to be conducted within desired standards of responsibility.
Establish an independent base of operations.	The DMS maintains a constructive relationship with Creative Pinellas through their Arts Business Incubator program, effectively renting office space at their facility. In line with Creative Pinellas' role to assist start-up arts organizations and the DMS' desire to solidify ongoing operations, an independent and sustainable office and small storage facility is needed.
Foster government and community relations.	The DMS maintains good relations with the City of Dunedin Parks & Recreation Department and with Creative Pinellas, which require continual cultivation. Relationships and awareness across a broader spectrum of government officials, businesses, and the general population are key elements of support for our growth objective.
Increase active volunteers & staff	The current workload for those contributing to the operation of the DMS is high. Recruiting and managing volunteers, and establishing funding to support paid staff where appropriate is essential.

Expansion

Strategy	Examination
Build existing programs.	The existing programs of DMS are a solid foundation. Building on them to seed or spin-off new programs increases the probability for long term sustainability, and reduces potentially duplicated effort and resources.
Eagerly pursue opportunities aligned with our vision, when resources and program managers are available.	The DMS will pursue opportunities that present themselves when they are aligned with our long-term vision and when we can adequately resource them. We will not take on more than can be executed to a respectable standard.
Add 2 or 3 groups or programs per year.	Such a pace of growth is needed to maintain a sustainable positive trajectory. At the same time, opportunities to grow will not be limited as long as new groups and programs can be implemented without stretching resources too thinly.
Assign program managers to select long-term vision programs.	Selecting a handful of long-term visionary projects provides the DMS with concrete direction, even though efforts to realize such dreams may change or ultimately be postponed indefinitely. Dedicated program managers must be appointed to develop such projects, including funding. <i>Initial long-term visionary projects:</i> 1) <i>Increase the number of groups of various types at all levels of ability;</i> 2) <i>Host an international conference for community music;</i> 3) <i>Own and operate a world-class concert hall.</i>

The Strategy Process

“Strategy 2019” is the outcome of a brief development process that took place over the first half of 2019.

Both the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors recognized that the organization had stabilized after its initial start-up, and a new focus was needed in order to reach the next plateau.

Informal discussions were held over several months culminating in a joint workshop that included the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee exploring and defining the future of the organization.

The organization’s purpose, vision, cultural values, strengths and weaknesses, and possible actions were discussed and distilled into the strategies in this document.

These strategies are intended to guide the Executive Committee as it operates the DMS over the next year or two.

At least twice a year the Board of Directors intends to review the progress of the organization until the strategies herein are reviewed in the Summer of 2021.

End.