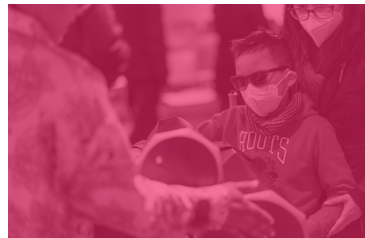




Xenia Concerts Strategic Plan



2023-2025



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Setting the Stage

Now in its ninth year, Xenia Concerts continues to build its reputation as a national leader in accessible concert presentation. Having started out as the first organization in Canada to create a series of autism-friendly concerts, Xenia Concerts is unique in that its primary purpose is to eliminate barriers to inclusion for people who are underserved in the broader arts community. Building on the success of our highly acclaimed sensory-friendly concert series, Xenia's recent accomplishments include:

2019 – Introduced dementia-friendly programming through a partnership with Alzheimer Society of Toronto

2020 – Continued to deliver high quality digital programming during the COVID-19 pandemic

2021-2022 – Launched and completed sound.colLAB, an innovative co-creation project in which seven first-time composers who identify as neurodivergent or disabled collaborated with a team of professional musicians to compose *Seven Miniatures* (2022) for String Quartet and Electronics

2022 – Developed and launched the Xenia Concerts Artist Training program, which prepares artists to deliver neurodiversity- and disability-friendly programming

In 2023, Xenia is well positioned to lead the way to a more accessible and inclusive future in the performing arts. The remainder of this report explains how we will do that.

Introduction: Growth Through Connection

Xenia Concerts is in a phase of growth and discovery. Having continued to deliver exceptional programming during the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization remains in a strong position: financially stable, with solid, trusting partnerships, and a pool of talented musicians who love performing for our audiences. As we emerge from a period of turmoil and uncertainty and look to the future, Xenia Concerts is poised to continue offering high-quality, inclusive events, building new partnerships, and strengthening its existing ones. We will lead the way to a more inclusive future in the performing arts, in Canada and beyond.

Having weathered several years of reduced contact with audiences and partners, Xenia still faces challenges, including:

- Reconnecting with audiences and community partners who have been absent or facing their own challenges caused by COVID-19
- Differentiating our digital offerings from those of other organizations
- Managing growth and change with a small staff
- Ensuring sustained financing

To maintain its strategic advantage as a leader in accessible arts programming, Xenia Concerts must focus on what differentiates it from other arts organizations. Xenia's key advantages are:

- A deep commitment to the consultation and co-design process, which helps the organization continuously improve its inclusion and accessibility practices
- Strong, trusting relationships with presenting partners, special interest groups, and funders

- A unified and committed team of staff and board members
- The ability to adapt and innovate in response to changing needs within the communities we serve

As we look to the future, Xenia Concerts must leverage its core advantages and the current circumstances to advance inclusion in the arts and inspire other organizations to follow its lead. We must ask:

- What does the concert of the future look like?
- How can Xenia build its expertise, codify it, and share that knowledge with others?
- How can Xenia deepen connections to its existing community while expanding its circle of inclusion?

As we embrace the challenge of continuous innovation and continue to deepen and expand our commitment to inclusion, we amplify Xenia's central message to the world: **that everyone deserves to benefit from inspiring and emotionally connective artistic experiences.**



A Refreshed Mission, Vision, and Values

In 2022, Xenia Concerts refreshed its mission, vision, and values. Xenia's new mission emphasizes the fact that we work *with*, rather than simply for, members of the neurodiversity and disability communities. The new mission is rooted in the social model of disability, and acknowledges that it is the responsibility of cultural leaders to adapt the design of their events to the diverse needs and abilities of their audiences. Xenia's new Vision positions the organization as an industry leader that supports artists and arts organizations across Canada to embrace the neurodiversity and disability communities through training and presentation partnerships.

Mission

Xenia Concerts Inc. works with the neurodiversity and disability communities to design, produce, and present exceptional performing arts experiences for children, their families, and others within those communities who face systemic and social barriers to inclusion.

Vision

To serve as Canada's leading resource for the creation and promotion of family-friendly, accessible, and inclusive performing arts experiences for neurodiverse and disabled audiences through professional training, productions, and presentations.

Values:

Enrichment – Xenia Concerts Inc. understands that music, the arts, and the opportunity to express oneself artistically improves the quality of life of all people.

Inclusion – Xenia Concerts Inc. believes that all persons have the right to experience, create, and otherwise express themselves through artistic endeavours.

Excellence – Xenia Concerts Inc. creates and presents programs, concerts, and other artistic productions of high professional quality.
Inspiration – Xenia Concerts Inc. seeks to inspire creators, artists, and audiences through arts experiences.

Community – Xenia Concerts Inc. promotes and nurtures social development and creates community cohesion through accessible and inclusive artistic events.

Sustainability – Xenia Concerts Inc. achieves its mission and vision through adherence to its values while always being fiscally responsible.



Objectives and Key Results

To ensure that Xenia Concerts is advancing its mission and vision while growing sustainably, the Executive and Artistic Director and Board of Directors have defined multi-year Objectives and Key Results (“OKRs”). These OKRs will guide the organization in planning, programming, and funding decisions, and will provide transparency to all of Xenia’s stakeholders, including partners, artists, funders, staff, volunteers, and board members. Quarterly check-ins will allow the organization to assess its progress and adjust its activities if necessary.

1

Develop a sustainable, resilient funding model for Xenia Concerts, ensuring the financial stability of the organization through diverse sources of revenue

Objective Statement 1

OKR 1

Key Results

1. Raise at least \$5,000 in individual donations outside RS Williams & Sons in the 2023 fiscal year, increasing to \$20,000 in Fiscal Year (“FY”) 2024 and \$25,000 in 2025
2. Secure at least one corporate sponsor at the \$10-30,000 level by fiscal year end (“FYE”) 2024
3. Build a circle of at least 10 donors who give \$1,000 or more per year by FYE 2025
4. Develop ongoing funding relationships with at least four foundations by FYE 2024
5. Secure sufficient operations funding by April 2025 to ensure the continuation of the Accessibility Coordinator position
6. The organization will achieve its budget on an annual basis

2

Establish Xenia Concerts as a national leader in accessible concert design and delivery through knowledge sharing and training.

Objective Statement 2

OKR 2

Key Results

1. Establish a web-based platform with a sustainable funding model that makes the Xenia Concerts Artist Training available to non-Xenia artists by FYE 2024
2. Establish at least three multi-year partnership plans with presenting partners outside Ontario by FYE 2025
3. Deliver at least three presentations or workshops to international audiences at major industry events by FYE 2025
4. Host at least three webinars per year on accessibility in the arts in FY 2024 and FY 2025, reaching at least 60 artists, arts administrators, designers, and educators each year
5. Design and conduct a study of the social and emotional benefits of Adaptive Concerts by FYE 2026
6. Deliver Xenia Concerts Artist Training to young artists through at least one music festival or higher education institution each year until FY 2026

3

Consistently improve Xenia's accessibility and inclusion practices by integrating the voices, talents, and experience of subject matter experts and people with lived experience into the design and delivery of Xenia programming

Objective Statement 3

OKR 3

Key Results

prominent role in 2023, 2024, and 2025

1. Add at least one Board member who identifies as neurodivergent or having a disability by FYE 2024
2. Create two new Artist Training modules by FYE 2025 with the help of advisors with disabilities: Programming for Blind/visually impaired and D/deaf/Hard of Hearing audiences
3. Present at least one public concert per season that includes an artist with a disability in a
4. Produce at least two concerts in the format designed by the ASD Youth Advisory Council by FYE 2024
5. Develop training resources for artists and arts administrators based on the findings of the Accessibility Accelerator Co-design Team by FYE 2026
6. Present one concert designed for B/blind and partially sighted audiences and one for D/deaf/HOH audiences by FYE 2025

4

Build a strong sense of community among Xenia Concerts stakeholders that supports families, builds relationships with funders, and supports the organic growth of Xenia Concerts among diverse equity-seeking communities

Objective Statement 4

OKR 4

Key Results

1. Increase annual attendance numbers from 907 to 2,000 by FY 2025
2. Strengthen community partnerships so that at least 10 organizations consistently promote Xenia Concerts events by FYE 2023
3. Develop an Equity Action Plan and official Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion policies by FYE 2024
4. Organize a circle of at least five caregivers and neurodiversity/disability community members who act as advocates for Xenia Concerts and assist fundraising and volunteer efforts by FYE 2024

5

Develop a robust system of measurement that demonstrates the positive social and emotional effect Xenia Concerts has on stakeholders

Objective Statement 5

OKR 5

Key Results

1. Establish five Key Performance Indicators (“KPIs”) that demonstrate the social and emotional impact of Xenia’s presentations by FYE 2024 to support the research study in OKR 2.5
2. Collect and analyze data from at least 100 concert goers on concert accessibility practices and at least five KPIs before FYE 2024
3. Collect and analyze data from at least 25 artists on the efficacy of the artist training program by FYE 2024
4. Conduct semi-structured interviews with at least ten concertgoers (caregivers, children, and youth) to gather qualitative data on the social and emotional impact of Adaptive Concerts by FYE 2025

Initiatives

Xenia Concerts has already initiated several exciting new projects related to its refreshed commitment to the neurodiversity and disability communities: the Accessibility Accelerator, the ASD Youth Advisory Council, the Artist Training Program, and new partnerships with arts presenters and community organizations across Canada.

Initiative 1: Consult Directly with People with Lived Experience

1.1 Direct Consultation

Xenia Concerts recognizes that people with lived experience of neurodiversity and disability have a deep understanding of the systemic and social barriers to inclusion they face every day. To acknowledge and honour this expertise, Xenia Concerts' Accessibility Coordinator has built a diverse network of paid co-designers who are members of the disability and neurodiversity communities.

1.2 Synthesize and Incorporate Recommendations

The Accessibility Coordinator will work together with Xenia's Executive and Artistic Director to incorporate the recommendations of our advisors into the design of our events.

1.3 Improve the Accessibility of Xenia's Public-facing Materials

Xenia Concerts will redesign its website to be compliant with the WCAG 2.1 guidelines and the Accessibility for Ontarians

with Disabilities Act, and to be as user-friendly as possible for neurodivergent users, people with learning disabilities, and people who are B/blind or partially sighted. Web accessibility will be built into all marketing and concert program materials, including social media posts, e-programs, visual aids, and venue guides.

1.4 Improve and Codify Xenia's Internal Accessibility Practices

Xenia's Accessibility Coordinator will work closely with the Board of Directors and executive leadership team to develop internal accessibility policies for staff, contracted workers, guest artists, partners, and audiences.

1.5 Provide Autistic Youth with the Opportunity to Take Part in Concert Design

Through the ASD Youth Advisory Council, Xenia Concerts will provide a group of Autistic youth with an opportunity to design their own concert. The youth will choose the musical content, the length of the performance, and the accessibility features for a pair of concerts in Toronto and Kingston.

Initiative 2: Arts Accessibility Training and Workshops

2.1 Train Artists, Including Every Xenia Artist

Every Xenia Concerts artist who presents an Adaptive Concert receives training in creating adaptive concert programs that embrace neurodiversity and disability. We will also make this training available to non-Xenia artists. The training includes:

- 3.5 hours of pre-recorded webinars, prepared by Erin Parkes, Ph.D. and Xenia's Executive and Artistic Director Rory McLeod
- A written guidebook with programming guidelines
- A one-hour online discussion with representatives from partner organizations, including neurodivergent musicians, and Xenia's Accessibility Coordinator and ED-AD to discuss the artist's programming ideas
- Follow-up discussions and additional training as required

2.2 Expand Training Materials and Resources

In addition to delivering the pre-existing training materials, Xenia Concerts will develop the following new training materials:

- Webinars for dementia-friendly programming, programming for D/deaf and Hard of Hearing audiences, and programming for B/blind and partially sighted audiences
- New chapters in the guidebook for artists:
 - Adaptations for D/deaf and Hard of Hearing audiences
 - Adaptations for B/blind and partially sighted audiences
 - Adaptations for people with dementia
- A guidebook that helps presenting partner organizations prepare for their first Xenia Concert. It will include:
 - Venue selection criteria
 - Basics of creating accessible marketing materials
 - Advice on how to connect with local community organizations
 - How to adapt venues to create a neurodiversity- and disability-friendly listening environment

2.3 Deliver Workshops and Seminars

Xenia Concerts will provide workshops and seminars to performing artists, music students, and arts administrators on the topics of accessibility and Inclusive Design. Examples include master classes for performance students at higher education institutions such as University of Toronto, workshops at young artist training academies such as Scotia Festival of Music, and speaking engagements at conferences such as Berklee College's ABLE Assembly and the Kennedy Center's LEAD conference.

Initiative 3: Build a National Network of Partners

3.1 Build Partnerships Across Canada

Xenia Concerts is already building and nurturing mutually beneficial partnerships with music presenting organizations across Canada to bring family-friendly accessible programming to new communities, particularly in places where it hasn't been offered in the past. To

support these partnerships, Xenia Concerts will assist presenting partners in improving their accessibility practices, preparing to present Xenia Concerts, and establishing and maintaining relationships with local autism and disability service organizations.

3.2 Address Accessibility Gaps

Led by our Accessibility Coordinator and a professional team of advisors who have lived experience with neurodiversity and disability, Xenia Concerts will address accessibility gaps in its own programming, marketing approach, and internal operations. This process will involve new adaptations for Xenia events such as musical ASL interpretation, audio augmentation for Hard of Hearing listeners, visual description, accessible web content, and other changes that will be revealed through the consultation process. Xenia will also aid our presenting partners in addressing accessibility gaps in their artistic programming.

3.3 Develop and Present Innovative Programming

Xenia Concerts is building a strong

community of committed musicians who are quickly becoming experts in developing and delivering accessible programming for neurodiverse audiences. While the organization continuously updates its institutional expertise, we continuously support our network of musicians in expanding their knowledge of accessibility practices. Together with Xenia's artistic team, we will continue to develop exceptional, repeatable programming that will be performed across Canada through our network of presenting partners.

Initiative 4: Integrate and Amplify the Voices, Talents, and Insights of Neurodivergent and Disabled¹ Individuals

4.1 Build Relationships with Artists with Disabilities

Starting in 2023, Xenia Concerts will build relationships with artists who identify as neurodivergent or disabled, with the goal of creating long-term creative partnerships that offer well-paid

work and valuable performance opportunities to the artists.

4.2 Amplify the Voices of Disabled and Neurodivergent Artists

Rooted in the foundation of trusting relationships with disabled and neurodivergent artists, Xenia Concerts will share their perspectives and advocate for positive change towards a more inclusive and accessible future in the arts. Xenia Concerts will proudly support equity for artists who have been, and still are, marginalized by systemic barriers and prejudice.

4.3 Add Disability Representation to the Board of Directors

To include and centre disabled and neurodivergent voices at all levels of the organization, Xenia Concerts will recruit at least one board member who identifies as neurodivergent or disabled. To support this transition to a more neurodiverse board of directors, Xenia's Accessibility Coordinator will work with the board to establish practices that support the accessibility needs of neurodivergent and disabled board members.

¹Based on feedback from individuals within the disability and neurodiversity communities, Xenia Concerts alternates between person first (i.e, person with autism) and identity-first (i.e., Autistic person) language. We continue to follow the evolution of language use within the autism, neurodiversity, and disability communities. In one-on-one interactions, we follow the preferences of the individual with lived experience.

Organization Structure

Former Organization Chart 2022-2023

Xenia Concerts' former organization structure (as of January 2023) divided responsibilities as follows, with a heavy reliance on the versatility of its Executive and Artistic Director ("EAD").

Task Management (2022-2023)

Board of Directors

Governance
Hire and advise executive team
Policies and procedures
Financial oversight
Vision and strategy
Fundraising

Executive and Artistic Director

Event design and artistic direction

Build & Manage presenting partnerships
Financial planning and management
Artist Training and curriculum development
Organization vision and strategy
Artist training and advising (program development)
Human resources

EAD and Managing Director

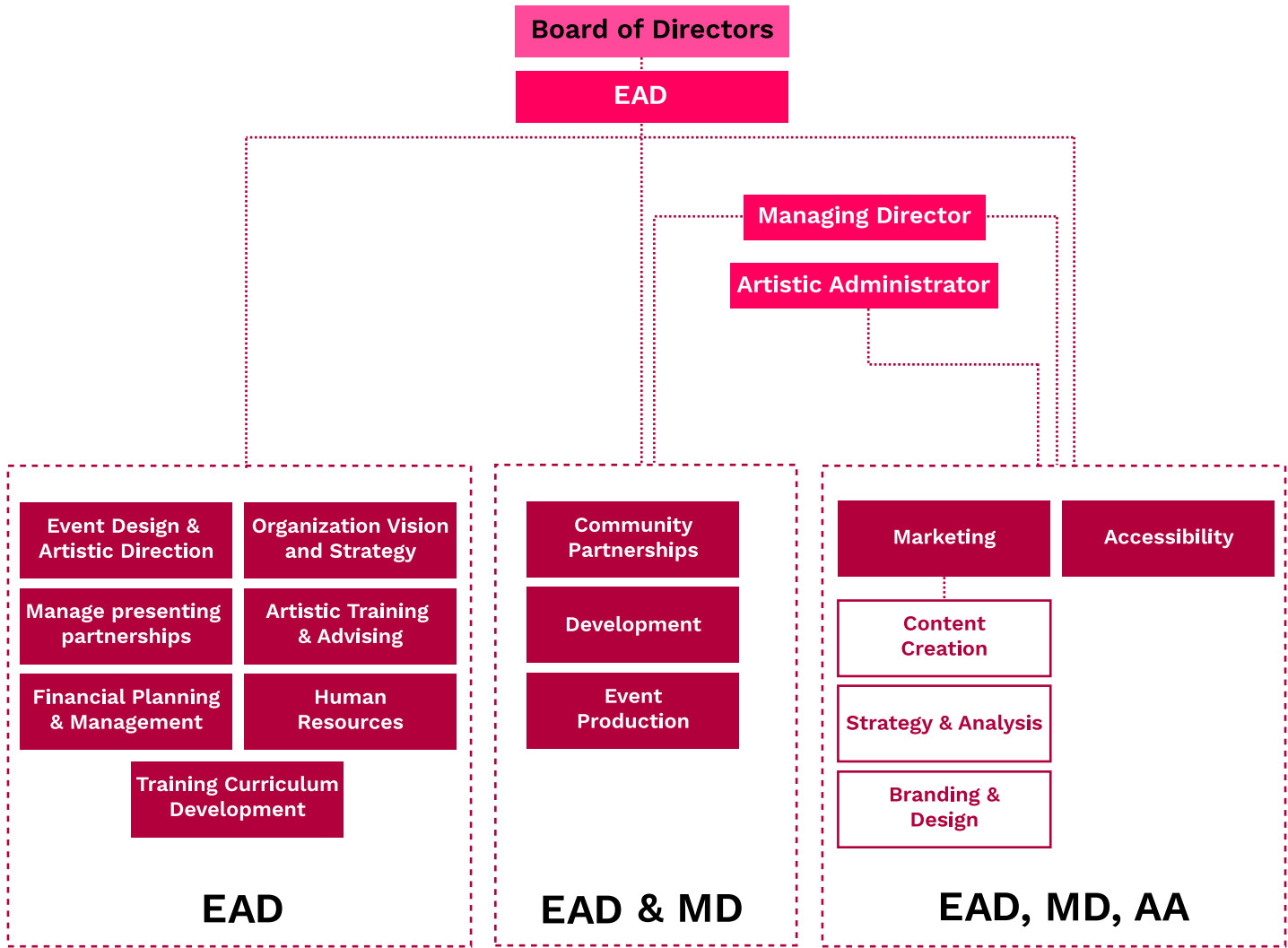
Manage community partnerships
Event production
Grant writing and fundraising

EAD, MD, and Artistic Administrator

Marketing (content creation, strategy and analysis, branding and design)
Accessibility

Xenia Concerts Organization Chart 2022-2023

Task Management



Revised Organization Chart

2023-2025

With the introduction of an Accessibility Coordinator and a careful redistribution of tasks, Xenia's organizational structure is evolving to be more sustainable, with clearly defined roles that allow for more straightforward succession planning.

Board of Directors

Governance
Hire and advise executive team
Policies and procedures
Financial oversight
Vision and strategy
Fundraising

Executive and Artistic Director

Organization vision and strategy
Financial planning and management
Human resources
Staff management

Event design and artistic direction
(including artistic vision and accessibility)

Manage presenting partnerships
Grant writing and fundraising

Accessibility Coordinator

Artist, organization, and volunteer training curriculum development
Accessibility design
Community consultation
Accessibility training: consulting and instruction

Managing Director

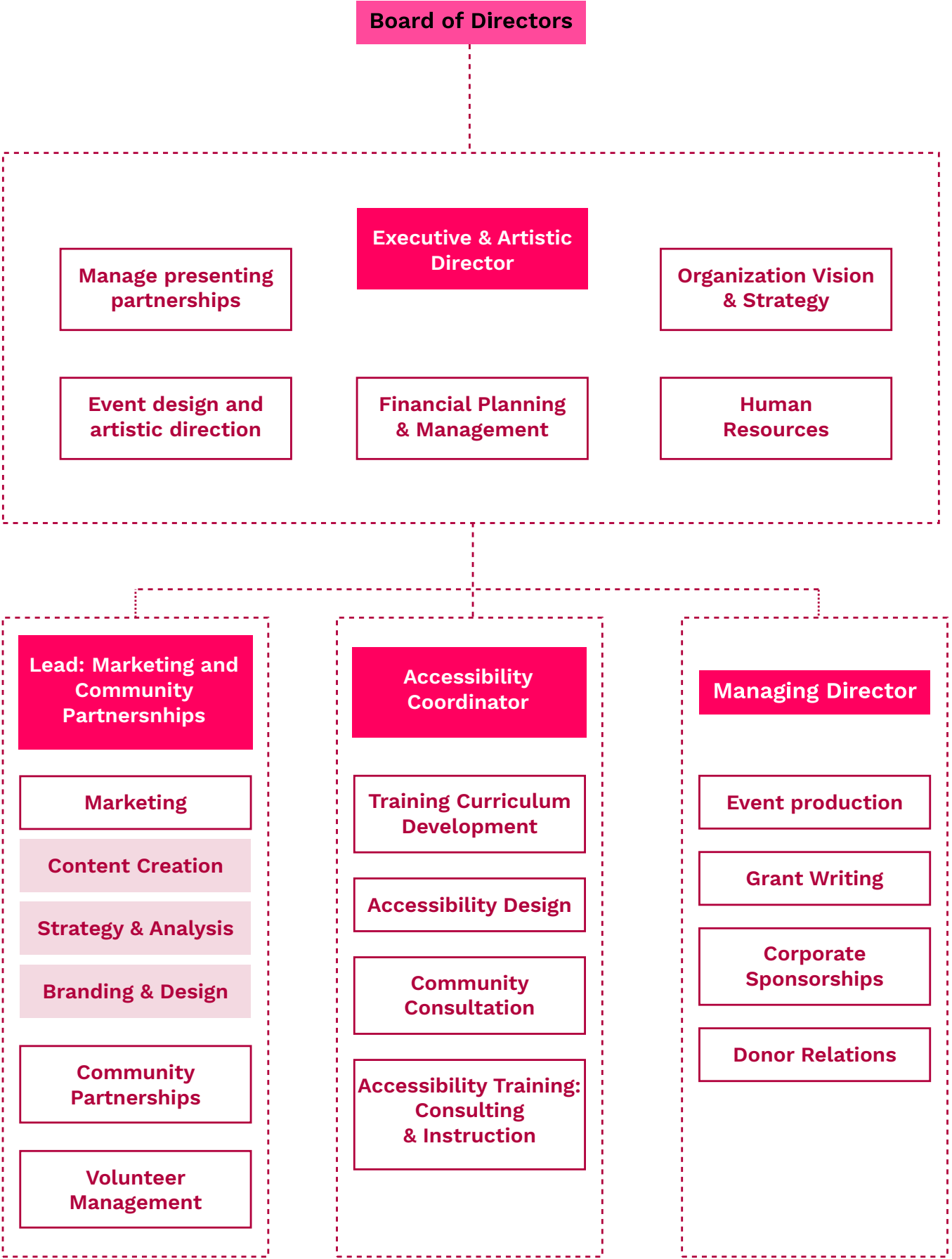
Event production
Grant writing
Corporate sponsorships
Donor relations

Lead: Marketing and Community Partnerships

Marketing (content creation, strategy and analysis, branding and design)
Community partnerships
Volunteer management

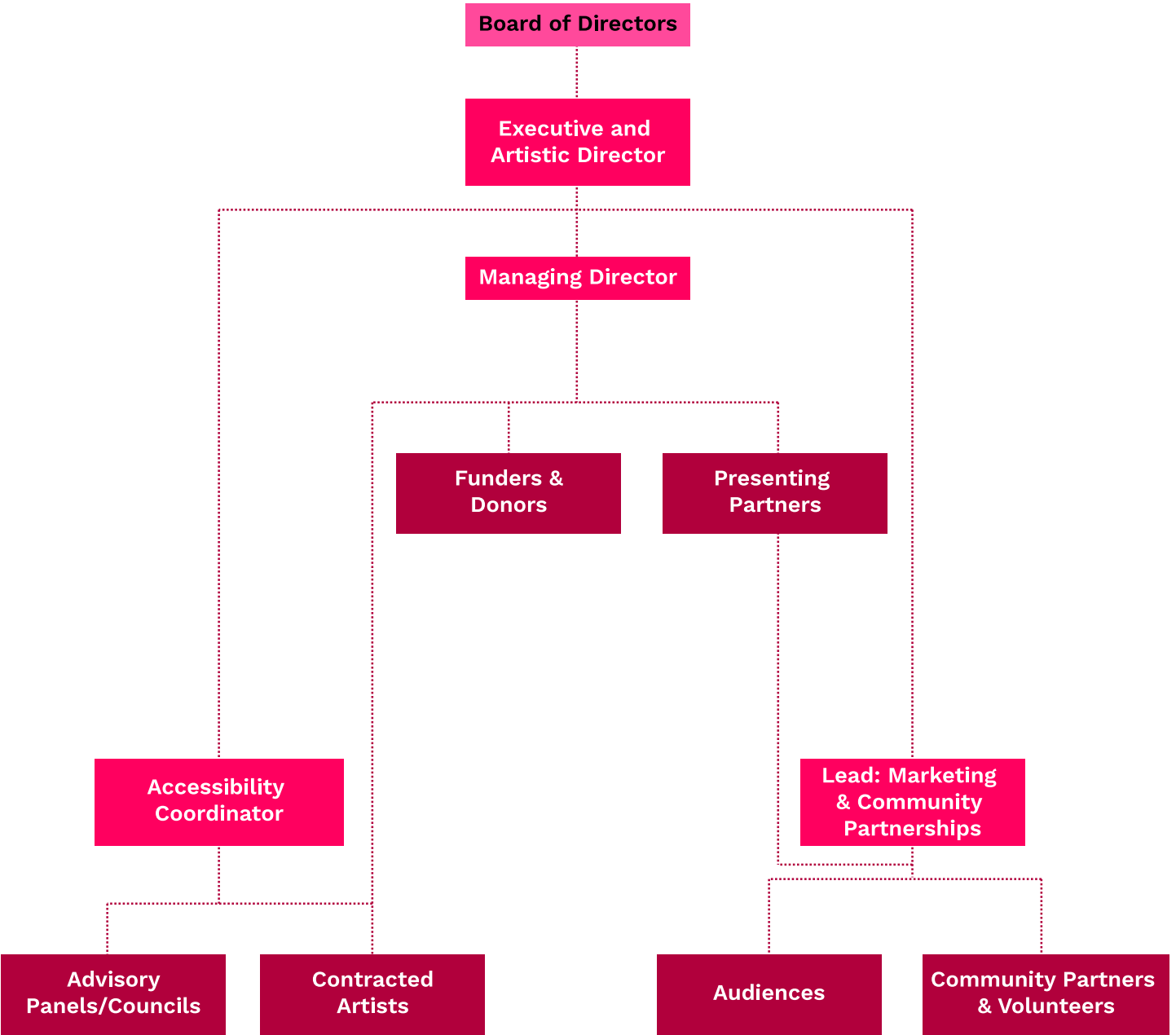
Xenia Concerts Organization Chart 2025

Task Management



Relationship Management

Xenia Concerts relies on healthy relationships with its partners, artists, audiences, and funders. By distributing responsibility for maintaining these relationships among multiple staff members and ensuring strong communication among its team members, Xenia Concerts can ensure the sustainability of its operations while building a strong sense of community among all its stakeholders. While the Executive and Artistic Director will remain the primary visionary and spokesperson for the organization, the Managing Director, Accessibility Coordinator, and Marketing and Community Partnerships Lead will take on more responsibility for relationship management as time goes on.



Stakeholders Map

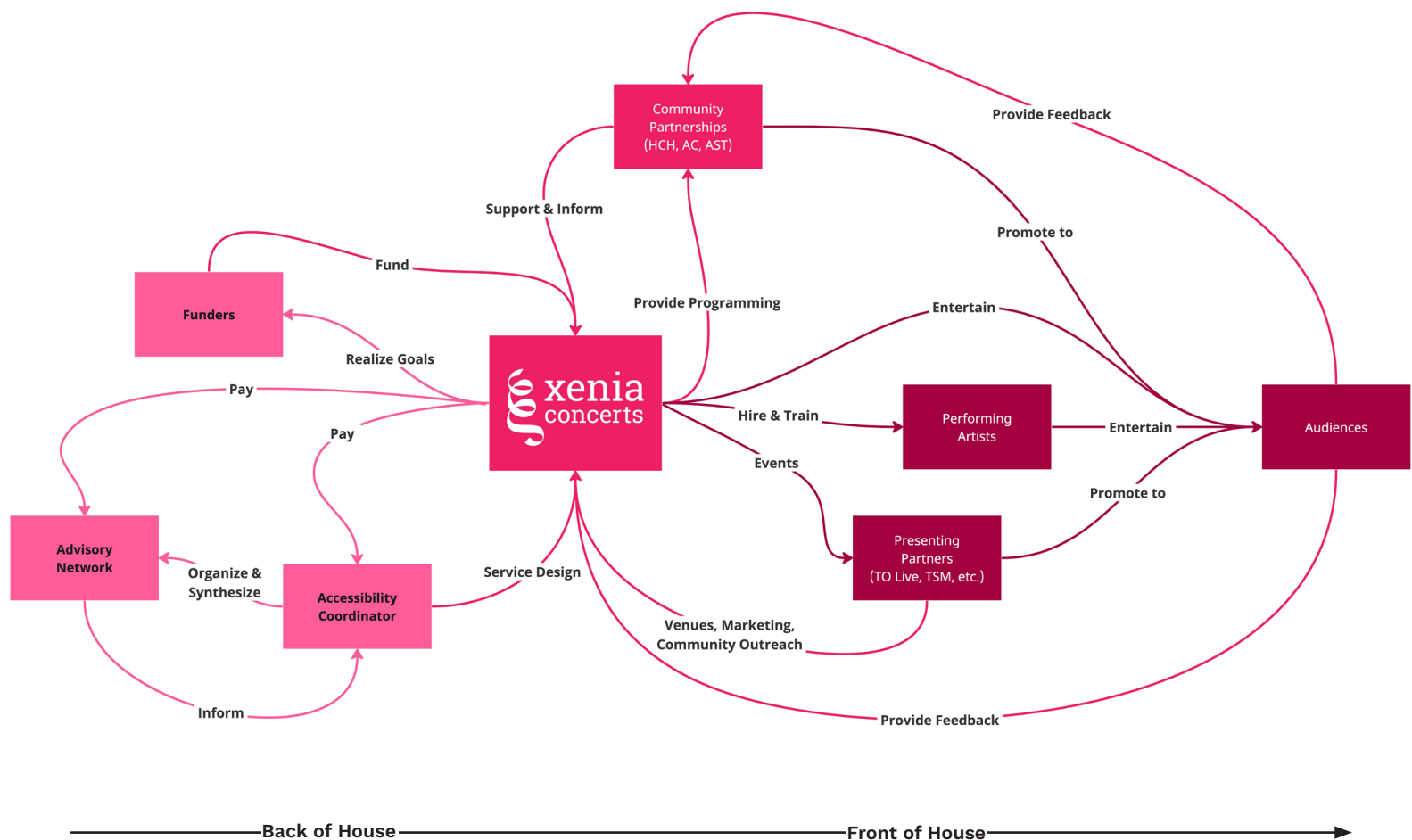
2023-2024: Building knowledge and resources

During this period of growth and knowledge building, Xenia Concerts[®] Accessibility Coordinator will consult with a network of paid co-designers with lived experience of disability and neurodiversity. This co-design team will assist in improving concert design, building audiences in new communities, and developing resources to support Xenia’s training and programming activities.

Xenia Concerts Stakeholders Map 2023-2024

Goals

- Build knowledge & resources



2025: Sharing knowledge and delivering expertly-developed programming

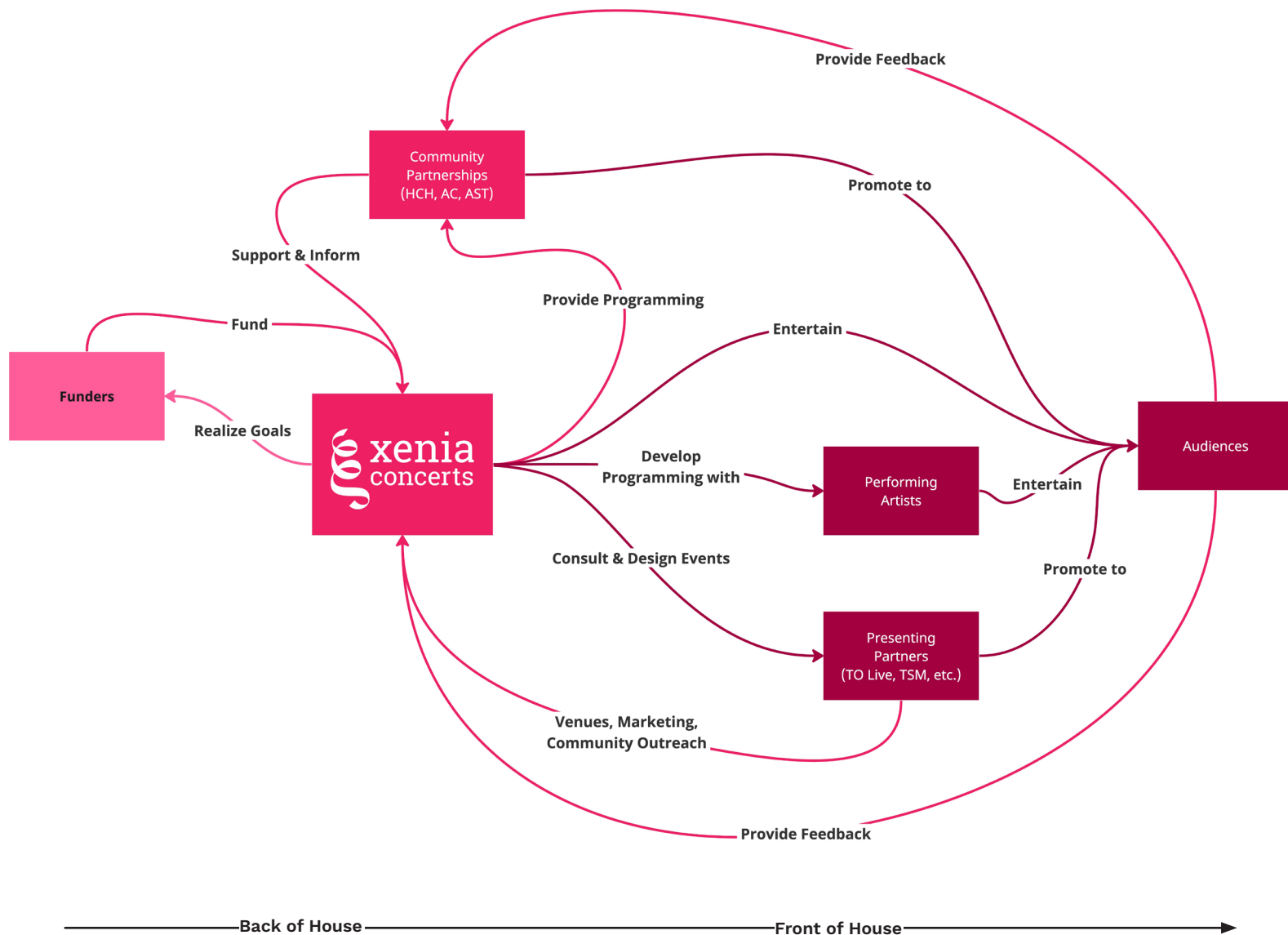
By 2025, Xenia Concerts will have:

- A large roster of trained and knowledgeable artists who will work with Xenia's ED-AD and Accessibility Coordinator to design and deliver concerts that embrace neurodiversity and disability
- A network of committed presenting partners who know how to deliver accessible, inclusive programming
- Strong, ongoing relationships with advisors and artists with disabilities who will work with Xenia's Accessibility Coordinator and ED-AD to:
 - o challenge the status quo within our organization and throughout the arts sector;
 - o develop innovative inclusion and accessibility practices; and
 - o inspire and teach other arts organizations to improve their accessibility practices.

Xenia Concerts Stakeholders Map 2025

Goals

- Use established network of presenting and community partners to deliver exceptional accessible programming across canada
- Lead Canada's movement towards an accessible future in arts programming



*Co-design and community consultation integrated into Xenia® core operations



Conclusion

Building a Launchpad to a More Inclusive Future

With its skillful and committed staff and board of directors, a strong reputation, and a growing network of enthusiastic artists, partners, and funders, Xenia Concerts is building a launchpad to a more inclusive future for the performing arts in Canada. Rooted in respect for the voices and abilities of those who face social and systemic barriers to inclusion, Xenia's approach to event design generates experiences that adapt to the diverse needs, sensitivities, and abilities of attendees rather than expecting attendees to adapt to traditional concert environments. While we cannot solve for every person's needs within a single event, we will diversify our concert designs to provide multiple points of access and provide neurodivergent and

disabled music-lovers with more options than they have had in the past. Xenia Concerts will continue to expand its circle of inclusion by incorporating the expertise of those who face exclusion on a regular basis. Xenia will push the boundaries of what a performing arts event can be, and whom an event can serve. By doing so, we will create opportunities for life-enhancing engagement in the arts for people who have historically been underserved, and foster a sense of belonging among all of our stakeholders – our partners, funders, audiences, board of directors, staff, and artists. We will continue to work towards a world where people across the full spectrum of human diversity can share their love of the arts – **each in their own way, together.**

Xenia Team



Rory McLeod
Executive & Artistic
Director



Kayla Carter
Accessibility
Coordinator



Paolo Griffin
Managing Director



Evan Lamberton
Artistic Administrator

Board of Directors

Gillian Story
President and Chair

David Visentin
Director

Robert Williams
Vice Chair

Amanda Smith
Director

Jesse Rosensweet
Treasurer

Sarah Nematallah
Director

David Guiney
Secretary

Jenna Richards
Director

Thank you for reading!

For funding, consultation, and partnership inquiries, please contact:

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