



STRATEGIC PLAN
2024-2026

Jazz Aspen Snowmass (JAS)

Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026

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Jazz Aspen Snowmass (JAS) started with its first music event in June 1991 at the Benedict Music tent and its opening night Gala was held at the historic Hotel Jerome. JAS has grown from a simple 3-day event to a \$13.3 + million enterprise (Note: JAS was \$5M in 2012) fielding many entertainment events ranging from the broad reach of the Labor Day Experience to the intimate jazz night-club-like setting of the JAS Café, while funding a year-round music education program in the public schools from Aspen to Rifle. During the past 23 years, JAS has grown from a grass-roots founder-driven single-weekend event to a mature arts institution with successful and vital performance and education programming, which is an integral part of the “Aspen Experience.” In Fall of 2023, the organization won Aspen Times’ Annual Reader Survey “Best of Aspen” award in the newly created category of “Best Event”. Over 100,000 votes were cast!

In recent years JAS has innovated with the creation of the JAS June Experience, a multi-venue four-day event in the Aspen core which has become the start of the Aspen social summer. The JAS Academy, funded for the long term, produced in association with the prestigious Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, gathers dozens of promising artists for weeks in the summer with some of the top jazz performers in the world as tutors, with a focus on helping prepare gifted students for a business-grounded career in music.

This Strategic Plan Summary puts forth in brief fashion the mission, objectives, and strategies of Jazz Aspen Snowmass with a focus on the three-year period 2024 through 2026.

The primary strategy of JAS can be simply stated as: achieving its mission and objectives by leveraging its core strengths developed over its 33-year history with the support of its growing base of enthusiasts and donors - and expanding on them by following this Plan once approved by the JAS Board of Directors.

THE MISSION of Jazz Aspen Snowmass is to present and preserve jazz and related forms of music through world-class performances, events, and education programs.

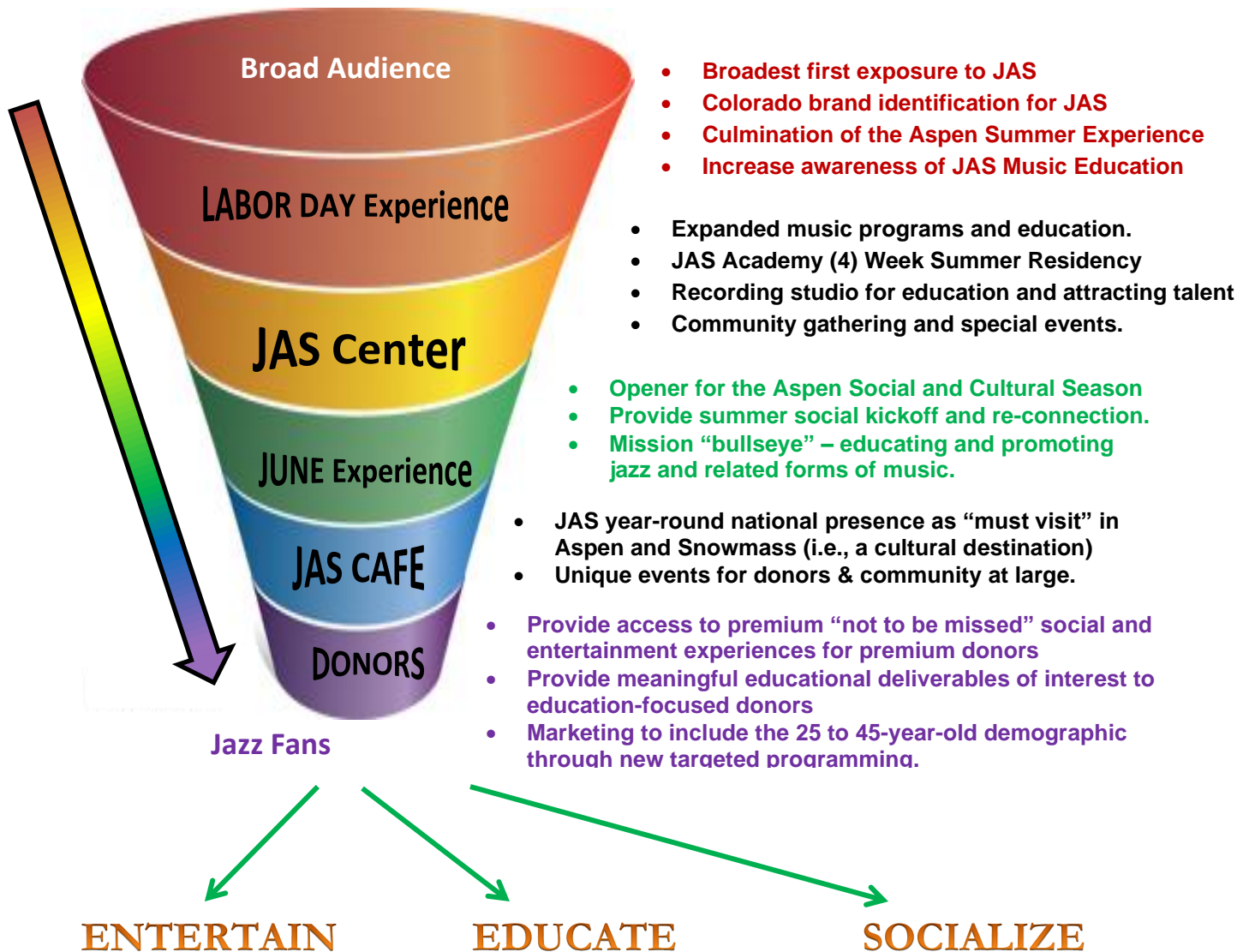
JAS LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES

- A. To achieve excellence in the presentation and preservation of popular, jazz, and related music forms by establishing JAS as a defining brand and element of the Aspen/Snowmass experience.
- B. To ensure that music education is a vibrant part of public middle and high school education in the Roaring Fork Valley and beyond, and to educate adult audiences through exposure at performances to jazz and lesser known artists; and the establishment of consistent music history programming around all JAS Café shows.
- C. To sustain and improve JAS as a vital community asset, which the JAS Labor Day Experience, and the JAS Café in particular, have become.
- D. To ensure JAS' long term financial viability through a combination of well-attended events whose ticket sales, donor contributions and sponsorships produced and will maintain 150% of annual operating expense plus the cost of local education initiatives, in safe liquid funds as a minimum cash reserve. Further future fund raising will aim at establishing an endowment fund of at least \$10million.
- E. Establish a permanent home for JAS, the JAS Center, above the historic Red Onion, that will enable an increase in performances and education programming as well as new uses including special events, community gatherings and recordings

JAS LONG RANGE STRATEGIES

Our core strategy is to reach, attract and entertain the broadest audiences with the Labor Day Experience providing the largest initial exposure to JAS, while the June Experience, JAS Center and JAS Café providing the more intimate social experiences desired by our audience.

VISUALIZING THE STRATEGIC ELEMENTS OF JAZZ ASPEN SNOWMASS



- **Labor Day Experience Strategy**

JAS has had a 2X increase in talent expense from 2019 to 2023) which has been absorbed primarily through the sales of Patron Passes, price increases and National Council Membership growth. Forward plans are:

- Further as an irreplaceable Aspen Community Asset and the pillar experience - a gateway to expose new enthusiasts, donors, and local community members. Encourage the spread of awareness about JAS' mission-driven philanthropic programs. Target market: National, statewide, and local, young and older audiences (ages 10 to 70+). Widest-reaching demographics of any Aspen institution. Capacity: 10,000
- Attempt to hold ticket price increases to no higher than inflation while growing revenue with new products, new hospitality opportunities and other offerings.
- Continue to invest in higher A-level talent to achieve two and possibly three advance sellout nights.
- Attract "Presented by" sponsors

- **JAS Center Strategy**

A JAS-owned facility will be the strongest platform from which to enlist donor support for the building of a JAS endowment.

- Reliable facility for year-round JAS Café presentations
- The "Message" of permanence is dramatic in how it transforms the perception around a Not-for-Profit's status and value to the community.
- Ability to conduct on-site education programs especially during school year.
- The venue will support JAS fundraising events & performances.
- The Recording Studio will become a game-changing reality for RFV-based student musicians who crave professional exposure and hands-on opportunities to learn about the business of music.
- Opens other programming possibilities (e.g., for other organizations and/or individuals' special events.)
- Sustain close relationships with the City of Aspen, the JAS Center developer, and the community at large.
- Expand JAS staff to manage a fully operational JAS Center for JAS and non-JAS events and uses.
- Fund raising is at approximately \$21 million of the \$25 million goal with additional donor opportunities still on the horizon. Once the \$25 million target is reached, a second phase \$10 million raise for endowment will commence.

- **June Experience Strategy**

- Four-day, multi-venue, downtown Aspen experience presenting a broad mix of musical genres including global and jazz influences.
- Target market: Local, second homeowner, Colorado “driver” and national travelers of all age groups but especially appealing to the younger audiences Target capacity 1500 – 2000 attendees.
- Social re-connection for returning locals promoting increases awareness of JAS Café and the JAS Center.
- Attract performance underwriters

- **JAS Café Strategy**

- Target market: local community, 2nd home-owners, and visitors of all ages, aiming for 90% attendance, of which 25% new JAS attendees.
- Provide exposure to jazz and related music (blues, Latin, funk/soul) in an intimate setting and educating our audiences by hearing other genres of related music through the prism of jazz.
- Create year-round presence in summer and winter for JAS utilizing multiple venues but eventually mostly the new JAS Center.
- Maintain and reinforce JAS Café as a unique “must visit” experience while in Aspen; expand awareness of JAS Café in anticipation of the JAS Center.
- Use JAS Café as the “soundtrack” for other Aspen institutions and donors.
- Leverage international branding and positioning of Aspen through the theme of “*Jazz Spoken Globally*”, presenting music and musicians from Africa, Brazil, Caribbean, Cuba, France, Italy, Israel & more.
- Attract additional performance sponsors and individual host donors, with the goal that each performance has a dedicated underwriter.
- Create programming, pricing, and promotions especially for the late shows; appeal to the younger demographic more inclined to the late show.

- **Education Strategy**

- Provide a meaningful music-education experience to local students through the JAS In-School Programs such as: JAS Faculty Assistance, Pays to Play, JAS Step-Up Program, JAS Beat Lab, District 8 Honor Jazz Band, Stuff for Students, etc.
- Incorporate awareness of JAS-funded public-school education programs at all JAS events.
- Continue educational programming to include “Listen Up!” series that boasts the history of jazz and related forms of music, delivered pre-concert through artist interviews.
- Explore broadening the education message to expand “Educating Adult Audiences” through performances exposing them to a wide range of jazz and

- related forms of music. Utilize performers to the breadth, depth, and evolution of jazz music both at the JAS Café and in schools. Explore multiple performers on stage for collective interview taking advantage of the range of artists present at the June Experience.
- Having re-established the JAS Academy, make it a permanent part of the JAS Education Program.
 - Expand the Academy once the JAS Center is operational.
 - Increase exposure to the Academy by overlapping its timing with the June Experience.
 - Focus the second two-week Academy session with an Afro/Caribbean musical genre focus.

• Donor Strategy

- Promote the total package of Experiences, including June, Labor Day, JAS Café and winter/summer special Donor events.
- Motivate National Council members to support beyond their standard donation.
- Expand further awareness that JAS is a 501C3 that supports music education.
- Formulate a strategy and execution plan to attract corporate sponsors
- Continue to expand National Council members through:
 - Parties exclusive to donors to create a bond between donors and JAS.
 - National Council tent for Labor Day Experience
 - Seating priority at all events
 - Expand the number of National Council “hosts” at JAS Café

• Financial Strategy

- JAS will place a high priority on balancing its goal of financial viability and sustainability with increased funding for its education programming.
- Operate within a Board-approved annual budget.
- Maintain a safely managed liquid money reserve of at least 150% of annual operating expense plus the cost of local education initiatives.
- Long-term viability is dependent on continuing to attract younger JAS donors to offset declines in the older demographic in Aspen.
- Maintain liquidity of all funds
- Invest cash in excess of reserves conservatively in support of executing this Plan.
- Identify and secure corporate, hospitality and high-net-worth individual sponsorships of performances.

JAS Financial Progress

