



MEMORANDUM

To: Brian Newhouse, Board Chair, Cantus
From: Sarah Lutman, Enrique Olivarez, Patty Johnson, 8 Bridges
Re: Brief update on Cantus Strategic Planning

Brian, thanks for the opportunity to work with Cantus on a Strategic Plan. As you requested, below is a summary of our strategic planning work to date and preliminary learnings/questions.

We look forward to working with you and the Cantus Strategic Planning Committee in the coming months.

As of today, 8 Bridges has reviewed, analyzed and summarized:

- Financials and audits
- Board minutes from FY22
- Executive Director's reports
- Ticket sales

As well, we have begun Desk Research (budget size, innovative efforts, admin structure) on the following choral ensembles:

- Voces8
- Chanticleer
- King's Singers
- Sweet Honey in the Rock
- Anuna
- Lorelei

In February, we will begin to:

- Develop interview protocol for ensemble and board/staff interviews
- Create slate of ensemble interviews
- Create slate of board/staff interviews

Preliminary Learnings and Questions include the following:

Organizational/Financial

- Cantus is doing well financially and has, thus far, weathered COVID well
- The organization's positive financial position is an opportunity to invest in resources and/or create an investment strategy to build long term financial stability

- Cash flow is an issue at certain times of the year. What can the organization do to mitigate having to draw from reserves for cash flow?

Preliminary Ensemble Research/Innovative Programs

- Ensembles researched to date: King's Singers, Chanticleer, Voces8, Sweet Honey in the Rock
- Voces8 and King's Singers have US-based foundations to capitalize on American philanthropy
- Some ensembles are more involved in video/digital than others; Voces8 invested significantly in video equipment; King's Singers has a wealth of videos on their site; Chanticleer doesn't have any videos on their website although they have a YouTube Channel
- Chanticleer and Voces8 have national/international advisory boards, which opens up opportunities for collaborations and fundraising
- Voces8 has an online Digital Academy that includes videos encompassing vocal warm-up exercises, teaching videos, the Voces8 method, workshops, performances, etc. They have an online course catalog of offerings, charge a fee, and provide discounts for ensembles. <https://academy.voces8.foundation/>
- Voces8 has production studio that they use and rent for community use

Thanks so much for this opportunity. Sarah, Patty and I are enjoying learning about Canuts. We look forward to continuing this work and helping make the organization stronger. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions.