

ANNUAL REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF  
ARTS, CULTURE AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY

The arts and culture sector play a vital role in enriching the fabric of our creative Franklin community. As we strive to build a vibrant and inclusive municipality, investing in arts and culture initiatives is essential for driving economic development, strengthening social cohesion, and nurturing a sense of identity among our community members.

**The Director of the Department of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy** joined the municipality about half way through FY24. Upon arrival the intention and focus of the Director was understanding the current Franklin community. This was done through various town meetings, and developing a community engagement and volunteer cultivation focused program. Using tactile art making workshop as the stage for connectedness; creativity and freedom of expression leads as the common denominator for relationship building in community culture.

**Community Engagement and Building Creative Networks** The Department Director started to build infrastructure for “Art on the Table” (a series of volunteer cultivation events). A free accessible workshop, offering a tactile in-person experience for community members. As well as creating a digital networking platform and resource, “Franklin’s Creative Database.”

“Art on the Table,’ a series of quarterly art-making workshops designed for Franklin Community Members. Presented by the Town of Franklin Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy. These free events aim to bring the community together by fostering creativity and skill development in table-top artmaking practices.

The synergy between volunteer cultivation events and art-making workshops foster a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose among participants. Engaging in creative activities together encourages teamwork, communication, and relationship-building; which are essential elements of effective volunteer cultivation.

These workshops serve as a platform for personal growth and skill development, empowering volunteers to harness their talents in service of our community focused mission.



The incredible Jenny Brown! The Collage Artist Leading our first workshop!

### Art on the Table Cultivating Community

**Art on the Table:** A series of quarterly art-making workshops for Franklin community members. Brought to you by the Franklin Town Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy.

**Our free art-making events aim to unite the community by introducing or honing skills in table-top artmaking practices.** We're thrilled to kick off our inaugural event and extend our gratitude to our Franklin community partners, including the Franklin Historical Museum and Birchwood Bakery + Kitchen.

**Stay tuned for updates on our seasonal free art-making workshops and learn how you can engage and volunteer with the Franklin Community.**

It's more than just recruiting volunteers; it's about nurturing relationships and igniting sparks of hope and change.

When we cultivate volunteers, we cultivate resilience in the face of challenges, unity in the midst of diversity, and empathy in a world that often feels disconnected. Each volunteer represents a thread in the intricate tapestry of our community, weaving together stories of kindness and solidarity.

The first event in the series was held in May 2024 bridging together Cultural District Partners; The Franklin Historic Museum and Birchwood Bakery & Kitchen. The next free volunteer cultivation event will be held in the fall of 2024. (Please visit our website, [franklinculture.org](http://franklinculture.org) for more information).

**Franklin’s Creative Database** was derived from direct feedback from community members that was gathered in the, ‘2023 Public Input and

Recommendations' report that was produced by AD HOC Subcommittee for the Arts and Cultural Initiatives. Of the need for community networking.

The Department aims to build a comprehensive database of artists and creative community members for the Town of Franklin. This database will help tailor future opportunities to meet the needs and interests of the local creative community; ensuring that Franklin remains a thriving hub for artistic expression and cultural engagement.



Franklin community member's input and willingness to participate in this database is crucial in helping us build a supportive infrastructure for all artists in Franklin. Creative's participation will help us showcase the diverse talents in our community and connect artists with opportunities.

This database is strategically labeled as "Creative Database," so as not to limit what type of creative practices community members are participating in. Poets, writers, performers, etc. should all have the platform to showcase their talents alongside visual artists. By having our community members passively shared on our website also offers a digital platform for those that might not have access to social media/digital footprint, enabling them to connect with the creative community in another way. We hope this database creates a peer path to collaboration in creatives finding each other for projects, coordinating events and sharing their work with the community.

Creative Franklin community members are encouraged to sign up on our website as the process is on-going.

### **Community Volunteer Infrastructure**

Alongside these creative networking and community

engagement programs the Department was producing; community resources as to how to organize creative community members were needed. The Department's goal was to provide community members with the suggested tools they could use to take culture and volunteer organizing into their own hands.

Providing comprehensive guides for community organizing has enabled transparent resources for community members to support their endeavors of coordinating events and programs, attracting visitors and increasing local spending. More information is shared on the Franklin Culture site, under 'Community → Volunteer Resources.'

By following the recommendations, it aims to create an inclusive volunteer infrastructure that optimizes volunteer engagement, maximizes impact, and promotes sustainable community involvement.

It is designed to be adaptable to meet the needs and circumstances of volunteer and event organizers, allowing community members to customize strategies based on their priorities.

## **community RESOURCES**

### **Volunteer Infrastructure & Planning**

- Section I. Accessibility
- Section II. Organizing and Engaging Volunteers → General Planning Template, Day of Volunteer Emergency Planning Template & Day of Volunteer Shift Template
- Section III. Community Considerations: Volunteer Code of Conduct, Organizes Communications → Group Communication Template & Running a Volunteer Meeting Template



**JOIN FRANKLIN CULTURE**

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By creating these named infrastructures in the cultural sector, it's not a matter of these practices not existing before the Department's creation - it's a matter of naming these practices to give transparency

and build cultural consistency; therefore making the community planning processes more equitable for all Franklin volunteers.

To add further tools in the list of the Department's resources; attention was turned toward public art infrastructure. Landing first on the Franklin Sculpture Park. But before the resources on 'how to apply' for artists to exhibit new work were publicized - the Franklin Sculpture Park needed a digital home on the Franklin Culture website.

## franklin sculpture park



**NEW Guide gives transparency to the project workflow; as well as giving artists context in how submitted materials will be used for marketing, programming etc.**

## CALL FOR ARTISTS GUIDE & NEW SIGNAGE

### Public Art | Franklin Sculpture Park

A landing page was added to the menu dedicated to the Franklin Sculpture Park. Describing the location of the park, its history, as well as naming physical attributes that the space offers.

“Welcome to the Franklin Sculpture Park, where nature's beauty meets accessibility for all. We understand that our visitors come from diverse backgrounds and speak different languages, which is why we've designed this webpage to ensure that everyone can fully enjoy and appreciate the wonders of our park. Whether you're planning a family outing, a solo nature walk, or a group picnic, we want to make sure that you have all the information you need at your fingertips. That's why we've made it easy for you to copy and paste our sculpture label text from below into [Google Translate](#), allowing you to access our content in your preferred language with just a few clicks.”

Described by Boston Magazine's Nathan Tavare's in 2020 article, "The town of Franklin manages this petite park, spreading out over just about an acre at the past site of the now filled-in old town pool, where you can now float around the 13 sculptures. Opened in 2014, the park's gentle walkway curves around a pond, showcasing view of local wildlife and

artwork.” As well as noting how the park can be used by all community members, and making accessibility part of the web presence and infrastructure of the park itself moving forward.

“The Franklin Sculpture Park is designed with accessibility in mind, ensuring that all community members can enjoy its artistic offerings. The park features wide, paved pathways that accommodate wheelchairs and strollers, allowing for easy navigation throughout the park. Strategically placed benches with backs provide comfortable resting spots for visitors. The park's sculptures are positioned at various heights to be easily viewed from different perspectives, including those seated or using mobility aids.

**FRANKLIN SCULPTURE PARK: CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE ARTIST & TOWN DEPARTMENTS PARTNERSHIP**

## NITTY, GRITTY DETAILS



**TOWN RESPONSIBILITIES**  
GENERAL PARK MAINTENANCE  
POURING CEMENT FOOTERS  
MAP AND SIGNAGE MAKING  
MARKETING & PRESS  
MAINTENANCE CHECKS AND COMMUNITY PLANNING WITH ARTIST  
INSTALLATION/DE-INSTALLATION SUPPORT

**ARTIST RESPONSIBILITIES**  
CREATING EXTERIOR BASED ARTWORK [CREATIVELY & FISCALLY]  
MAINTENANCE CHECKS AND COMMUNITY PLANNING WITH DIRECTOR OF ARTS, CULTURE AND THE CREATIVE ECONOMY  
INSTALLATION & DE-INSTALLATION (WITH SUPPORT OF TOWN DEPARTMENTS)

Additionally (**and coming soon**), clear, descriptive signage in large, readable fonts enhances the experience for visitors with visual impairments. These thoughtful accessibility features make the Franklin Sculpture Park an inclusive space where everyone can engage with and appreciate public art.” Once the digital path was created, it was time to publish infrastructure on how to participate in the consideration of public exhibition.

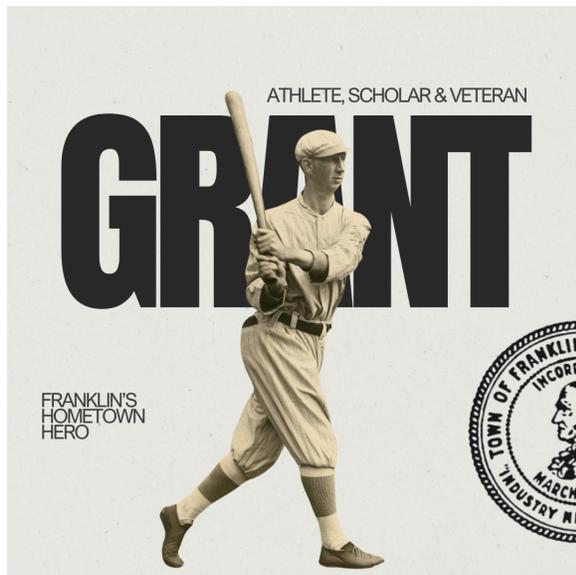
The ‘Spring 2024 Sculpture Park Guidelines’ is a document that takes the guesswork out of the application process. The guidelines were shared on the website and social media channels, (also running a parallel marketing campaign for ‘the call for artists’).

The ‘call for artists’ opened on April 1st and closed on June 1st, 2024. Giving three months for artists around New England to submit their pieces for consideration and display of their work for the park. The first wave of new sculptures are slated to be installed in the Fall of 2024.

This work set the foundation of future infrastructure in Franklin's quest for more accessible public art pieces and practices.

Other avenues of public art the Department is exploring at the time of this report (June 2024), is a collaborative digital exhibition between the Department of Arts and Culture, Veterans Services and the Franklin Historic Museum.

The inaugural exhibit will focus on one of Franklin's WWI Veterans, Eddie Grant; also known as "Harvard Eddie." The goal of this inter town-department project is to bridge the history of our town into the current community through a free, accessible, public art exhibit launching in November 2024; exploring what we can do with digital work.



### Marketing & Social Media

Developing a digital footprint in Franklin is important to offer a public facing consistency. Through social media marketing campaigns all of the Department's work can be threaded together for public consumption. #AroundTownFranklin

Building a consistent look and feel of what that means to the Franklin Cultural scene, enhancing our digital presence through an engaging website and active social media has strengthened community connections and amplified the reach of our cultural initiatives.

Other municipal cross marketing department collaborations the Department of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy has been involved in thus far is the Town of Franklin's website redesign, as well as the Economic Development subcommittee project of marketing and branding for the town.

## SNAPSHOT OF @FRANKLIN CULTURE



Let's get Social



ENHANCING OUR DIGITAL FOOTPRINT  
 FranklinCulture March - 707 followers  
 FranklinCulture June - 894 followers  
 Franklin Culture August - 926 followers

Jul 22 - Aug 20th, 2024

Accounts Reached: 1.5K  
 Accounts Engaged: 177 +63.9%  
 Total Followers: 926+2.4%  
 Content Shared: 162

June - August Stories & Reels

Shared Stories: 1,000  
 Posted Reels: 2.5 Plays  
 Watch Time of Reels totaling: 3hrs



All of this work; community networking, volunteer cultivation, consistency in program infrastructure and building on the public art scene has been geared towards building a strong cultural scene and local economy within Franklin.

# creative economy workflow



Vibrant cultural scenes have been shown to enhance property values, as they make the area more attractive to new businesses and residents. This overall economic vitality creates a desirable environment that supports sustained growth and development within the community.

Public art plays a crucial role in this dynamic, as it is not merely for tourists but serves to reflect the values and identities of community stakeholders. Local businesses can become 'third places'—social environments that foster community interaction and engagement—by actively participating in and supporting cultural programming. This transformation into community hubs further solidifies the interconnectedness between economic growth and cultural vibrancy, benefiting everyone involved.

This collaborative community oriented workflow is the foundation to authentic growth. Building infrastructure to ensure consistent programming, ultimately driving economic growth for the community.

Honoring the history and creative work generations of Franklin residents have already done is also part of bringing the rest of the creative community forward. Enabling our community as whole to set our best foot forward when inviting new community members into our space - whether it be residents or visitors.

Listening and building relationships are foundational elements of effective community culture infrastructure planning. By actively listening

organizers gain valuable insights into the unique needs, aspirations, and challenges faced by residents.

With the support of Franklin community members, residents, the Franklin Cultural District, the Franklin Cultural Council and community stakeholders - this blended workflow fosters trust and collaboration, enabling the creation of tailored programs and public art that truly resonate with the community.

This collaborative dynamic not only enhances the relevance and sustainability of infrastructure projects but also empowers the community, promoting a sense of ownership and collective investment in the outcomes.

Consequently, these practices cultivate a robust, inclusive, and resilient community infrastructure that supports long-term growth and well-being. The energy the Town of Franklin carries currently and while preparing for the future program milestones: MA250, The World Cup, and Franklin 250.

## upcoming

"In the most competitive selection process in FIFA World Cup history, Boston was selected from a field of 22 finalist cities across Mexico, Canada and the United States. Gillette Stadium will serve as the venue for all matches hosted in Boston."

Nearly half a million visitors from around the world are expected to travel to Boston resulting in projected net economic impact of more than \$500 million, according to the Boston Consulting Group

- 2024 Continuation of Annual Fests & Strolls
- 2025 Introduce MA250 to community | Annual Fests & Strolls
- 2026 World Cup Community Programming MA250 | Annual Fests & Strolls
- 2027 FRANKLIN'S 250 overarching community programming | Annual Fests & Strolls
- 2028 FRANKLIN 250



Respectfully submitted by Cory Shea,  
Director of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy