Know When to Hold ‘em or Fold ‘em: Sunsetting and Leadership Transition Stories from Arts Nonprofits
Meet the leaders
Sarah Peters
Jehra Patrick
Meet the orgs
Northern Lights.mn

• Founder-led, then co-director led, then Executive Director-led
• 1–3 FTE staff depending on the year
• 15 years of beloved programming
• Budget grew substantially in 1st 8 years
• Then struggled to sustain adequate budget
• Board voted to sunset org in January 2023
Emerging Curators Institute
Emerging Curators Institute

- Founder-led, then co-director led
- 3 years of accomplished programming
- Sustained growth and success
- National following
- Sustained and growing budget
- Strong network of supporters
- In process of transitioning to non-profit
How to untangle personal and organizational needs?
What does letting go look like?
Who will support you in the transition?
Who will support your org?
Group Discussion
What are your needs as a leader? What is your trajectory? Your future goals?

How does your current role fulfill those needs?
What is the ideal trajectory for the organization? Where does your org need to go whether or not you go with it?

Are these personal and organizational trajectories and needs in alignment?
Who is your support network in this process? Board? Colleagues? Other EDs? Family? Friends?