

Manifesto: The Change We Need

Kurt Allen & Team Calypso
Calypso

A bold vision for the future of
TUCO and the art form of Calypso.



Executive Summary

Calypso is one of our nation's greatest cultural treasures. But today, the art form faces major challenges:

Participation

Declining youth participation

Structure

Weak development structures & limited long-term planning

Support

Inadequate support for practitioners & weak succession systems

Commerce

Insufficient year-round commercialization

❑ **Our mission:** transform TUCO from a seasonal competition body into a dynamic, development-driven, year-round cultural institution.



Our Vision

To build a TUCO that is:

What TUCO Will Be

- Stronger
- More inclusive
- Development-oriented
- Internationally respected

A TUCO That:

- Nurtures youth
- Honours elders
- Embraces technology
- Strengthens institutions
- Empowers stakeholders
- Mobilizes the diaspora
- Secures the future of Calypso



Our Guiding Approach

The Ripe Banana and Green Banana Plan

Ripe Banana Plan

Immediate action. Quick wins. Practical solutions for present needs.

Green Banana Plan

Long-term planning. Legacy building. Strategic preparation for the future.

Our philosophy: Meet today's needs while building tomorrow's institution.

Pillar 1: Youth Development and Succession

We will:

01

Modernize the Junior Calypso Monarch framework

02

Establish the Calypso Youth Academy (CYA)

03

Create a structured pathway from junior to senior Calypso

04

Expand year-round youth training, mentorship, and performance opportunities

Goal: secure the future of Calypso through youth development.



Pillar 2: Member Welfare and Support

We will:

- Pursue health and life insurance plans for members
- Create a **Dignity Fund** for vulnerable members
- Expand the role of the Welfare Officer
- Build an inventory of member-owned businesses
- Promote and support economic activity within the TUCO family

Our Goal

Protect, support, and uplift our members.



Pillar 3: Governance, Transparency, and Representation

We Will:

- Strengthen transparency and accountability
- Consult members on competition and judging reform
- Improve fairness in governance and representation
- Address Tobago's place within the Calypso fraternity
- Explore Tobago-hosted major Calypso events
- Examine fair Tobago semi-final representation at Calypso Fiesta

New Positions to Be Created:

**Director of Global
Calypso
Integration &
Development**

Youth Officer

 **Goal:** build a TUCO that is trusted, fair, and future-ready.



Pillar 4: Industry Growth and Professional Development



Tent System

Expand the tent system and support year-round programming.



Recognition

Honor key contributors and launch Calypso Ambassador Status.



TUCO Music Band

Create a TUCO Music Band and strengthen media representation.

Goal: grow beyond the season.

Pillar 5: Women's Development and Representation

We will:

- Establish a strong Women's Arm within TUCO
- Create spaces for mentorship, leadership, and advocacy
- Support women in performance, writing, production, and entrepreneurship
- Promote dignity, visibility, and fair representation for women in Calypso

Goal: strengthen Calypso by empowering the women who help shape it.



CALYPSO
ROSE

Gelien Matthews

Pillar 6: Innovation and Digital Transformation

Our Commitment

We will embrace technology and responsible AI in Calypso development to position TUCO for greater relevance in a modern cultural economy.

We Will:

- Embrace technology and responsible AI in Calypso development
- Expand the CALYPSO CALYPSO Educational App
- Improve digital education, promotion, archives, and communication
- Position TUCO for greater relevance in a modern cultural economy

Goal: make Calypso stronger through innovation.

Pillar 7: Global Expansion and Strategic Partnerships



International Calypso Summit

Host a global gathering for Calypso.



Calypso Festival

Create a festival for History Month.



World Organization of Calypso

Strengthen the global body and ICM.



Strategic Partnerships

Build key local and global alliances.

 **Goal:** take Calypso global.



Pillar 8: Economic Empowerment and Opportunity

We Will:

- Explore practical economic initiatives for members
- Engage the Minister of Agriculture on possible land-access opportunities
- Strengthen TUCO's role in year-round cultural and economic development
- Create more sustainable pathways for members and the organization



Our Goal

Build opportunity, not just activity.

Pillar 9: Housing for Calypsonians

We Will:

- Advocate for equitable housing access
- Partner with HDC and Housing Ministry
- Engage lenders and development agencies
- Challenge stigma in housing applications
- Expand access to rent-to-own programmes

Our Commitment

Housing is a necessity, not a privilege. We will act urgently to remove barriers for Calypsonians.



Green Banana Plan: Long-Term Legacy

Our long-term priorities are clear:

1



Calypso Museum

To preserve and celebrate our history

2



Permanent Event Hall

For Calypso programming year-round

3



Permanent TUCO Headquarters

A home for the institution

4



Stronger Systems

For long-term growth, preservation, and institutional development



Goal: build lasting legacy infrastructure for the future of Calypso.

Why This Manifesto Matters

This is not just about competitions. This is about building a complete Calypso ecosystem.

A stronger TUCO must invest in:



Youth



Welfare



Governance



Innovation



Women's Development



Industry Growth



International Expansion & Legacy



Economic Empowerment



Housing for Calypsonians

We are building for today and for generations to come.

The Change We Need

Practical Action

Real solutions for real challenges facing Calypso today.

Strategic Partnerships

Building alliances locally, regionally, and internationally.

Responsible Innovation

Embracing technology to strengthen the art form.

Real Care

Genuine commitment to the art form and its people.

Join **Kurt Allen & Team Calypso Calypso** as we build a stronger future for TUCO and for Calypso.

THECHANGEWENEED

