

WOMEN'S WAY: 2016 – 2019 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Board of Directors: September 19, 2016

2016 – 2019 Strategic Planning Process

In March of 2016, WOMEN'S WAY launched a strategic planning process to set the direction for the organization's future. WOMEN'S WAY was facing an important moment – shifts in the funding landscape, changes in the organization's leadership, and emerging needs, concerns, and opportunities in the community. WOMEN'S WAY designed the strategic planning process to involve the community and draw on best practices to determine how it could achieve the greatest impacts.

The strategic planning process included:

- Interviews with current and past supporters, partners, and volunteers
- Focus groups with colleagues, thought leaders, past and current grantee partners, volunteers, supporters, and members of its Young Women's Initiative
- Input from attendees at the 2016 Powerful Voice Awards
- An online survey
- A town hall meeting
- A scan of the field to identify trends, opportunities, needs, and ideas
- Visioning and goal-setting sessions with WOMEN'S WAY's Strategic Planning Committee and Board of Directors

What WOMEN'S WAY heard:

- WOMEN'S WAY has an incredible legacy, and the passion, desire, and need for WOMEN'S WAY is as strong as ever.
- People want to be part of a community, through a reinvigorated WOMEN'S WAY, that is dedicated to women's rights and gender equality.
- WOMEN'S WAY cannot do it all; greater clarity and focus will result in more meaningful outcomes and contributions.
- Raising money and leveraging support for organizations working on women's rights and gender equality is regarded as a core strength and a continued need; no one else is filling this need in the Philadelphia region.
- WOMEN'S WAY needs to enhance its ability to adapt to and lead in shifting landscapes, and to ensure the organization and its approaches are inclusive, collaborative, clear, and effective.
- WOMEN'S WAY needs to invest in its internal strength – in its people and processes – to enhance the impacts it has for women, girls, and gender equality.

In response, WOMEN'S WAY's 2016 – 2019 Strategic Plan reflects an updated mission, guiding principles, vision, and four strategic goals that will guide our work for at least the next three years. WOMEN'S WAY thanks all who shared their ideas, questions, critiques, and support throughout the planning process. In the coming years, we will continue to ask for feedback to ensure that we stay contemporary and relevant, and we look forward to communicating about our progress, lessons, and achievements.

WOMEN'S WAY

Our Mission

WOMEN'S WAY inspires and mobilizes the community to invest in organizations and leaders that will advance the rights of and opportunities for women and girls, and achieve equality for all genders.

Our Guiding Principles

Community	We are dedicated to building a dynamic, diverse, and inclusive community in the greater Philadelphia region that is bound together by a shared commitment to women, girls, and gender equality.
Opportunity	We are committed to ensuring that all individuals have the right to choose what happens in their own lives, and enjoy unfettered access to opportunity.
Intersectionality	We believe that inequities, biases, and norms are inextricably linked, such as those rooted in gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, differential ability, age, and socioeconomic background, and we will use this lens to shape and assess all opportunities and strategies.
Innovation	We will take thoughtful risks in pursuit of ideas and solutions that are more effective, efficient, just, and sustainable than current practices.
Accountability	We will be responsive to our partners, community, and donors; we will be attuned to the environment to be sure our work is at the cutting edge of women's rights and gender equality issues; and we will be strategic and transparent with the resources entrusted to us.

Our Vision

WOMEN'S WAY will inspire more people to demand and invest in a future where all women and girls have the freedom to shape their lives and their communities, and all people experience gender equality and justice.

WOMEN'S WAY

Our Strategic Goals for 2016 – 2019

The Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2019 will guide our efforts to enhance opportunities for women and girls, and to work toward equality for all genders. Four strategic goals will direct our efforts and investments during 2016 – 2019:

I. Cultivate High Impact Philanthropy	Develop and support an engaged network of donors that invests in high impact philanthropy for women, girls, and gender equality.
II. Create Conditions for Organizations and Leaders to Thrive	Support learning, connections, and opportunities for organizations and leaders to do their best work for women, girls, and gender equality.
III. Build and Connect Our Community	Build and connect a community of donors, volunteers, activists, and organizations dedicated to women, girls, and gender equality issues.
IV. Invest in Organizational Sustainability and Growth	Invest in the organization to build its strength as a resource for donors and partners.

Goal I: Cultivate High Impact Philanthropy

Develop and support an engaged network of donors that invests in high impact philanthropy for women, girls, and gender equality.

Key Objectives

1. **Donors:** Expand the network of individual donors and institutional funders that invest in women, girls, and gender equality.
2. **Funding:** Update grantmaking policies to be responsive to community-defined priorities and to fund core needs, emerging issues, risk-taking, and systems change.

Strategic Initiatives

- **Donors:**
 - Conduct targeted outreach to and stewardship of current, past, and prospective donors to identify needs, interests, and opportunities for engagement
 - Conduct targeted outreach to build relationships and collaborations that reflect the full spectrum of diverse donors across the region
 - Investigate and develop, as appropriate, options for donors to choose how and where they give in support of women, girls, and gender equality
 - Educate and encourage institutional funders to invest more in programs, projects, and organizations that work for women, girls, and gender equality
- **Funding:**
 - Update and maintain consistent grantmaking policies to fund core needs, emerging issues, risk-taking, and systems change
 - Incorporate a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens into all grantmaking programs to ensure grantee partners reflect the diversity of the region, and funding strategically addresses disparities in opportunities and outcomes

Measures of Success

- Increased numbers of individual donors and institutional funders that invest in women, girls, and gender equality, resulting in increased dollars
- Expanded options for donors to engage in philanthropy through WOMEN'S WAY
- Increased diversity among WOMEN'S WAY's donor base
- Grants policy and programs that result in strategic, responsive, thoughtful, and courageous grants designed to decrease disparities, increase opportunities, and improve services, policies, and systems

Goal II: Create Conditions for Organizations and Leaders to Thrive

Support learning, connections, and opportunities for organizations and leaders to do their best work for women, girls, and gender equality.

Key Objectives

1. Sponsor and complete research that builds support for women, girls, and gender equality issues, and that informs grantmaking, strategies, and investments.
2. Serve as a hub for discussion, learning, and partnerships for organizations, volunteers, donors, and community members.
3. Facilitate capacity building for partner organizations to advance their work in support of women, girls, and gender equality.
4. Cultivate, support, and connect emerging and established leaders in the community.

Strategic Initiatives

- Sponsor and complete research that builds support for women, girls, and gender equality issues, and that promotes data-driven grantmaking, strategies, and investments
- Facilitate and support partnerships and networks focused on women, girls, and gender equality
- Identify, leverage, and offer support for building the capacities and structures of organizations working in support of women, girls, and gender equality
- Identify and offer ways to support emerging leaders and sustain established leaders
- Invest in the Young Women's Initiative to support their efforts to make a difference in the community and to expand their leadership opportunities
- Incorporate a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens into all research, convening, and capacity building to improve capacities to address disparities in opportunities and outcomes

Measures of Success

- Completed research, and analysis of its impact on grantmaking and strategies
- Evidence of increased attention to women, girls, and gender equality issues
- Expanded and stronger partnerships and networks focused on women, girls, and gender equality
- Improved capacities of partners to address issues related to women, girls, and gender equality
- Increased support for leaders and organizations working for women, girls, and gender equality
- Improved support for the Young Women's Initiative that produces high satisfaction and retention, and stronger leadership outcomes for its members and WOMEN'S WAY

Goal III: Build and Connect Our Community

Build and connect a community of donors, volunteers, activists, and organizations dedicated to women, girls, and gender equality issues.

Key Objectives

1. Re-establish WOMEN'S WAY's position in the community as an expert about issues, needs, and opportunities related to women, girls, and gender equality.
2. Strengthen connections across the WOMEN'S WAY community.
3. Make the case for investing in women, girls, and gender equality by highlighting issues, needs, and opportunities.
4. Capture and communicate impacts, and make the connection between donations and outcomes.

Strategic Initiatives

- Produce and implement a communications plan that:
 - Supports the mission, goals, and position of WOMEN'S WAY
 - Includes an assessment of and possible updates to the name, tagline, and logo
 - Outlines strategies to build community among all stakeholders with proactive communications to focus on issues, promote partner organizations, highlight gender equity gaps, and build pressure to address them
 - Ensures information about WOMEN'S WAY is easily accessible and clear to all stakeholders
 - Reflects and advances WOMEN'S WAY's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Provide regular training and learning opportunities for the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and donors to communicate about women, girls, and gender equality issues
- Develop evaluation and learning mechanisms that define, capture, and communicate about impacts, lessons learned, successes, and the value of being part of the WOMEN'S WAY community

Measures of Success

- Completion, implementation, and evaluation of a communications plan
- Increased visibility and recognition of WOMEN'S WAY as the go-to voice for women, girls, and gender equality issues
- Increased awareness of gender equity gaps and actions to address them
- Ability to communicate about impacts

Goal IV: Organizational Sustainability and Growth

Invest in the organization to build its strength as a resource for donors and partners.

Key Objectives

1. Strengthen WOMEN'S WAY's financial position.
2. Invest in the organization's infrastructure and systems.
3. Invest in building a culture of learning, innovation, and inclusion.
4. Recruit and retain new leadership and staff.
5. Invest in the development and structure of the Board of Directors.
6. Prepare the organization for leadership transitions.

Strategic Initiatives

- Produce and implement a multi-year development plan
- Review all systems and processes, and streamline and update them, as appropriate
- Continue to nurture an organizational culture to align all internal and external constituents, processes, and practices with the mission, vision, and guiding principles
- Review and update all policies and practices regularly to incorporate best practices and new ideas for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Recruit, place, and retain executive leadership, who will have a mandate to review and update the organizational staff structure, and recruit and retain talent for all positions
- Review and update the structure and composition of the Board of Directors, including committees, and implement a long-term Board of Directors development plan
- Complete succession plans

Measures of Success

- Improved financial capacity and strength
- Effective and stable executive leadership and staff retention
- Strong and healthy organizational culture
- Improved capacities of the Board of Directors and staff to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion internally and in the community
- Highly engaged, effective, and consistent leadership at every level of the organization
- A Board of Directors and committee structure and composition that supports the organization's mission and goals, engages the talents of members, and creates opportunities for new leaders to get involved
- Completed succession plans