



STRATEGIC FRAME

MARYLAND PHILANTHROPY NETWORK

SPRING 2023

Table of Contents

01

Table of
Contents

02

Message from
our leaders

03

Mission, Vision,
Values

04

North Star

05

Journey North

06

Strategic
Overview

07

Strategic
Objectives

10

Acknowledgments

Message from our leaders

"Maryland Philanthropy Network began as a forum for Baltimore philanthropists to connect, learn from one another, and improve their grantmaking. Now, 40 years later the organization has grown to be a statewide leader for philanthropy. Through this frame we outline how we will continue improving our work supporting collaborative action and working towards a more equitable and just Maryland. We are excited to continue this journey together and advance the impact of philanthropy across Maryland."



Kevin McHugh
**MPN Interim President & Trustee of
Helen J. Serini Foundation**



David Daniels
**MPN Board Chair & CEO of
Bainum Family Foundation**

"In 2015, MPN named racial equity as a strategic objective. It became clear during this strategic refresh process that moving forward, racial equity should be woven into each objective and focus area for the organization. With the release of this strategic framework, MPN is taking the next step to drive change for our network of funders in Maryland. I'm hopeful with equity at the forefront, we can create a better path forward for funders and the communities we serve."

Mission, Vision, Values

Our **mission** is to build and activate a diverse, informed, and effective network of philanthropists to inspire transformational impact throughout Maryland.

We **envision** a courageous philanthropic community leading transformative and innovative work that results in an equitable and just Maryland.

The following core operating values influence the culture and practices of the Network as an exemplary organization in Maryland. We strive to embody them in all we do.

- **Generosity:** We believe generosity is an essential component in our democracy and fundamental to our humanity and community life.
- **Inclusivity and Respect:** We value the perspectives and contributions of all people and incorporate the viewpoints of diverse communities in our work. We strive to create an open, compassionate, and trusting environment that facilitates learning, dialogue, and healthy debate to inform and strengthen philanthropy.
- **Diversity:** We are committed to supporting a funding community that encompasses differences in the attributes of both individuals (such as race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and religion) and organizations (foundations and giving programs of differing sizes, missions, geographic locations, and approaches to grantmaking).
- **Racial Equity:** We value racial equity as an organizational operating principle and are committed to continued learning on issues related to race, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Forward-Thinking:** We seek strategic opportunities and new ways to meet emerging and existing challenges.
- **Forthright Stewardship:** We conduct our business with honesty and integrity and utilize best practices in the stewardship of our resources and accountability for our results.

North Star

What is an organizational North Star?

After 36 years of existence and service, in 2019 MPN moved to formally become a statewide organization. Now its operation and business model must evolve, and the organization must define its new North Star. The North Star defines what sort of organization we want to be and in context of both the sector, our colleague organizations, and our own unique place and time.

Maryland Philanthropy Network's North Star

MPN will be a stronger intermediary by collaborating and aligning with and on behalf of members' impactful work. We will position ourselves as a thought and sector leader in Maryland; attract local, state, national and government funding for transformational impact; and engage in public policy, system-change, and partnerships vital to the sector and our members' work. We will remain a place where grantmakers at all levels network and learn to practice philanthropy in service of equity and justice.

Central to our equity and justice work, we value racial equity as an organizational operating principle and are committed to continued learning and action on issues related to race, equity, diversity, and inclusion. To make that value commitment real we must acknowledge the deep-seated structural and racial inequities in our communities and across our country and our role in perpetuating negative narratives and structures that help sustain these inequities. MPN has elevated its efforts to deepen our community's understanding of racism and the actions we can take individually, institutionally, and collectively to recognize and disrupt bias, challenge our own norms and practices, and support other organizations in doing the same.

Journey North

This North Star requires a financial investment and commitment to sustainability and growth as we will never maintain even the current operations on the dues and limited contributions of our members.

To remain relevant and become sustainable for our future work, we need to:

- 01** Attract deeper investment from our members and external partners.
- 02** Build staff capacity to lead efforts as MPN meets the needs of an evolving organization and sector.
- 03** Build broad partnerships and relationships throughout the state and beyond.
- 04** Amplify consistent and compelling communications that inspire and activate our members and partners.

Strategic Objectives

Maryland Philanthropy Network has identified fourteen strategic objectives which have been organized into two categories and six areas of focus. The objectives are outlined in the following pages along with various metrics to gauge success. Staff have also developed workplans to guide the implementations of this strategic frame.

Our Strategic Objectives were designed to be dynamic: to grow and change as our organization and membership community change. For each objective, we have provided the measurement tool we will use to gauge our success and progress. As a membership organization, we rely on our members not just for the vibrancy they bring to our community, but also to hold us accountable to the strategy we set forth. We encourage you to read through the objectives and measurements below. Our work is shared work; our success is shared success.

Programmatic	What We Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members• Philanthropic Practice• Public Policy
Operational	How We Do It	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability• Strategic Communications• Governance

MPN’s programmatic and operational strategies will be developed, implemented, and evaluated using a racial equity, diversity, and inclusion (REDI) lens to ensure that our values around these principles are reflected with intention across the work of the organization. Accountability around REDI will be embedded throughout MPN’s systems, processes, practices, and decision-making as part of due diligence for the organization’s programmatic and operational work.

Members

Objective #1: Diversify membership to fully represent Maryland's philanthropic community.

- Our objective will be measured by member acquisition, diversification, retention, and engagement.

Objective #2: Strengthen opportunities for member engagement and impact through member groups.

- Our objective will be measured by increased engagement, leadership, and ownership in groups as well as new connections or actions taken by member groups that support equity and justice.

Objective #3: Engage members through an enhanced digital experience.

- Our objective will be measured by new and increased use and connections created online as well as satisfaction with digital platforms.

Philanthropic Practice

Objective #4: Present programming that is high-quality, timely, and relevant.

- Our objective will be measured through evidence of:
 - member participation and collaborative relationships,
 - impact of learning on their actions and/or grantmaking practice,
 - REDI principles reflected in the way we design and implement programs as well as the content and the modeling provided by MPN staff and board

Objective #5: Move members towards best, promising, and emerging practices in their work.

- Our objective will be measured by evidence of learning and changes to members' philanthropic practice.

Objective #6: Provide data and conduct research using culturally responsive and equitable evaluation practices to inform members' work and the field.

- Our objective will be measured by members' and partners' participation, dissemination, and support as well as our ability to disaggregate data in service of racial equity and diversity efforts.

Public Policy

Objective #7: Grow and support the capacity of our members to engage in public policy. This work may include increasing the capacity for greater collaboration within and outside of the philanthropic sector for both MPN and its members.

Objective #8: Lead Maryland policy efforts related to issues both in support and in defense of the philanthropic sector.

Objective #9: Promotion of positive and practical solutions to advance equity and justice.

Our objectives will be measured by:

- MPN policy engagement that abides by our public policy charter (board approved), is consistent with our mission; in alignment with our organizational principles, practices, and operational growth goals; and within the bounds of our 501(c)(3) status.
- An active, fully functioning public policy committee that is guided in their decision-making with MPN staff by clear operational strategies in support of MPN's mission and position as a leader for the philanthropic sector in Maryland.
- Progression against a set of benchmarks that track the growth and development of member capacity and engagement with public policy.
- Stories that illustrate MPN's role in facilitating added capacity for MPN members to participate across the public policy continuum that support their missions, the philanthropic sector, grantmaking, and their grantees.

Sustainability

Objective #10: Strengthen organizational infrastructure to better serve our membership and undergird MPN's mission and necessary growth.

- Our objective would be measured by:
 - indicators of sound fiscal management, robust administrative systems that meet organizational needs, and an effective and efficient staffing structure.
 - development and adoption of enhanced business model.

Objective #11: Diversify and grow mission-related revenue sources to ensure operational resilience.

- Our objective will be measured in the amount of support raised beyond the membership dues.

Strategic Communications

Objective #12: Increase awareness and understanding of MPN's work through consistent, compelling core messaging.

- Our objective would be measured by:
 - greater support, loyalty, and collaboration with MPN.
 - internal practices, processes, and behaviors that reflect core messaging.
 - development of tools and products that convey core messaging and intentionally uplift voices and stories representing our diverse membership using accessible language and design practices.

Governance

Objective #13: Board committees are created in accordance with the approved protocol and policies and support the goals of the Strategic Frame.

- Our objective will be measured by:
 - Every board committee has a clearly defined charter, structure, clear leadership roles and responsibilities for key staff and board members.

Objective #14: Board members lead from the shared organizational values and commitment to the vision, mission, and work in alignment with the Strategic Frame.

- Our objective will be measured by:
 - Every board member will receive training to clarify their roles and responsibilities, and each will sign a Conflict-of-Interest pledge and a Commitment Document annually.
 - The board will annually evaluate their performance based on the Strategic Frame and their roles and responsibilities and commitments.

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- **Talib Horne**, board member
- **Elisabeth Hyleck**, staff
- **Shanetta Martin**, staff
- **Kevin McHugh**, board vice chair
- **Megan McSwain**, staff
- **Elyse Robinson**, staff

Thank you for your continued support and investment in Maryland Philanthropy Network.

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Maryland Philanthropy Network
Strategic Frame

10