



*The McKnight Brain Research Foundation  
Strategic Review & Planning Session*

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## Review and Refinement of last Strategic Planning Session:

- Vision of the Foundation
- Values of the Foundation
- Mission Statement
  
- Strategic Review & Planning
  - Review of Goals – Assessment of Accomplishment
  - Revision of Action Plans
  - Monitor and Update Process



## Vision of the Foundation

## **Vision**

### **A clearly articulated vision can:**

- Provide important information about where you are heading, and why
- Provide inspiration to those you are leading
- Be a touchstone when decisions need to be made
- Be a friendly reminder of why you keep on going when you'd rather quit
- Help your focus when you're confused with details and frustrated with setbacks
- Keep you, and the people with whom you share your vision, on track.

The scope of your vision needs to be boldly broad enough to allow for a wide range of possibilities. But it also needs to be grounded enough so as to be do-able. A powerful vision allows for a combination of head and heart by generating an image so compelling it captures not only the foundation's logic and objectivity, but also its imagination, ambition, enthusiasm, and creativity.

## **Vision**

- What do you want as the fundamental purpose of your foundation's existence?
- What unique contribution do you want your foundation to offer to the community you serve?
- What do you want historians to say is your foundation's enduring legacy twenty-five years from now?
- In what ways do you want your foundation's resources perceived as providing value to your community?
- What does your organization do that enhances the quality of life for the next generation?

## Value Statement of the Foundation

## **Values:**

A values statement reflects the core principles that ground an organization. According to foundation consultant Anne Morgan, a values statement “informs your work—how you interact with others.” A vision and mission, on the other hand, define the purpose of your philanthropy—what you hope to accomplish in the future, and what you plan to accomplish in the present, respectively. An organization’s values remain unchanging, while the vision and mission can, and in fact should, be revised periodically.

Because a values statement frames the vision, mission and funding guidelines, foundations should define their values *first*. To start, ask yourselves the following questions:

- Why does our foundation exist?
- What moves us the most?
- How would we like to be remembered?
- What ground rules should we instill to guide our behavior?

## **Values:**

- Values are the priorities and preferences of individuals and groups, which reflect what is important to them.
- Organizations do not put their values into practice, people do.
- People will only put the organizations values into practice when their personal values are in alignment with the values of the organization.
- Decisions are based more on values than rational analysis.
- Values drive performance.
- The values at work within an organization influence behavior.
- Values are the DNA of all organizational culture. They determine what happens and why.

### ***Statement of Values***

According to Independent Sector, every code of ethics is built on a foundation of widely shared values. The values of the independent sector include:

- Commitment to the public good;
- Accountability to the public;
- Commitment beyond the law;
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals;
- Inclusiveness and social justice;
- Respect for pluralism and diversity
- Transparency, integrity and honesty;
- Responsible stewardship of resources; and,
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.



## Mission Statement of the Foundation

## **Mission Statement**

If a vision statement looks to the future, a mission statement points to the present. The mission statement describes what a foundation plans to do today to make the world a better place for tomorrow.

A mission statement serves two purposes:

- To guide the foundation in its focus. The statement should help clarify goals and set forth grantmaking proprieties.
- To inform grant seekers, other foundations and the public about what the foundation will fund.

With a clear mission statement, you help steer potential grant seekers into applying, or not applying, for funding from your foundation.

Mission statements are not set in stone, and can be refined or changed over time. In fact, boards should review their foundation's mission statement periodically to ensure it continues to meet the needs of their funding community.

## Strategic Planning Process

Simply put, strategic planning determines where an organization is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it'll know if it got there or not. The plan is ultimately no more, and no less, than a set of decisions about what to do, why to do it, and how to do it.

## McKnight Brain Research Foundation Strategic Planning Process

1. **Identify your purpose (mission statement)** - This is the statement that describes why your organization exists, i.e., its basic purpose. The statement should describe what needs are intended to be met and with what approach, the type of communities are sometimes mentioned. The trustees should develop and agree on the mission statement. The statements will change somewhat over the years.
2. **Select the goals your organization must reach if it is to accomplish your mission** - Goals are general statements about what you need to accomplish to meet your purpose, or mission, and address major issues facing the organization.
3. **Identify specific approaches or strategies that must be implemented to reach each goal** - The strategies are often what change the most as the organization eventually conducts more robust strategic planning, particularly by more closely examining the external and internal environments of the organization.
4. **Identify specific action plans to implement each strategy** - These are the specific activities that must undertaken to ensure the foundation is effectively implementing each strategy. Objectives should be clearly worded to the extent that people can assess if the objectives have been met or not.
5. **Monitor and update the plan** - Trustees regularly reflect on the extent to which the goals are being met and whether action plans are being implemented.

## McKnight Brain Research Foundation Strategic Planning Process

### **Strategic planning begins by asking the following questions:**

- Where are we going (goals)?
- What do we want (objectives)?
- How will we know when we have it?
- Where, when and with whom do we want to work?
- Where will it work?
- What obstacles do we face?
- What resources, including financial, do we have?
- What resources, including financial, do we need?
- What is the first, then subsequent steps and activities?
- Did we do what we said we would (evaluation)?

## Monitor & Update the Plan

- What do we monitor? •
- Who monitors? •
- What are the accountabilities of the grantees? •
- Annual, Quarterly, Monthly? •
- Corrective actions •
- Criteria for consideration of potential partnership opportunities