

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

People are the priority of this plan.

We are changing the *Who* in order to change the *What* and the *How*.

**THE NEW
HARMONY
PROJECT**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MISSION

The New Harmony Project is a national arts organization whose mission is to nurture writers in the development of scripts and new works that interrogate the complexity of hope. Through artist-centered programming, we care for writers so they can change the world.

SCOPE

The purpose of this strategic plan is to establish a framework to become an antiracist, mission-driven, impactful organization that deeply values the cultivation of meaningful community, sustainability, and highly effective operations.

FRAMEWORK

We have established three strategic directions that will guide us along the path towards becoming a more equitable, just, antiracist, and impactful organization.

1. Prioritizing an equitable, intersectional, antiracist ethos and practice
2. Reimagining and mobilizing board, staff, and resources to serve our core purpose
3. Cultivating meaningful community through people, programming, and processes

Each strategic direction is supported by three primary goals and a series of success metrics that will be utilized to achieve our strategic vision.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will launch a comprehensive, community-centered, program development process to identify new opportunities for support in Indianapolis and nationally. We will use these programs to expand our reach, connect with new communities, and achieve our vision of a more just, equitable, antiracist, and impactful New Harmony Project.

DEFINITIONS

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	Overarching imperatives that will allow us to get from where we are now to where we want to be.
GOALS	An achievable aspiration that supports the strategic direction.
SUCCESS METRICS	How we define successful advancement towards our goals and strategic directions.
EQUITABLE	Recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances.
JUST	Based on or behaving according to what is morally right and fair.
INTERSECTIONAL	The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of actively and systemically excluded and/or underrepresented individuals or groups.
ANTIRACIST	Opposing racism and promoting racial tolerance. “Taking stock of and eradicating policies that are racist, that have racist outcomes” (Malini Ranganathan, Antiracist Research and Policy Center). “The opposite of ‘racist’ isn’t ‘not racist.’ It is ‘antiracist’” (Ibram X. Kendi, <i>How to be an Antiracist</i>).
MEANINGFUL	Developing a relationship between our organization and each of our artists that is mutually supportive, and authentically in service to the needs of each person and project.
ACTIVELY AND SYSTEMICALLY EXCLUDED AND/OR UNDERREPRESENTED	Includes (but is not limited to) Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC); persons identifying as female; LGBTQ+ persons; and people with disabilities. The phrase “diverse communities” as used herein refers to these communities. As cultural understandings grow and language evolves, we will reflect those understandings and that language by revising this definition to appropriately identify, acknowledge, respect, and empower persons from all such communities.

INTRODUCTION

For more than three decades, The New Harmony Project has served as a wellspring of creativity, providing vitally important developmental support to writers and artists as they move through their creative journeys. We elevate those writers and artists whose stories grapple with, investigate, and interrogate the complexities of hope in its many forms. We invest in the early stages of scripts and new works that examine what it means to be human, and prioritize the writer's process over their product.

We are thrilled to unveil a strategic plan that shapes our future and guides the organization on a path to becoming a more equitable, just, antiracist, and impactful entity. **People are the priority of this plan.** We are changing the **who** in order to change the **what** and the **how**. This plan embraces a bold, radical, and inspiring future for The New Harmony Project as a place of belonging, a community of care, and an organization that places humanity at the center of everything it does. As an organization with a long history of fidelity to values and belief in mission, we are excited to deepen those commitments and embrace new perspectives as we begin the next chapter of our evolution.



ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

In April 1986, a group of theater, film, and television professionals gathered in Indianapolis to explore the trend in the entertainment arts toward exploitative and sensational material. They concluded there was a need to engage and support writers whose work sought a goal beyond mere entertainment, work that sought to empower and uplift. From this meeting, The New Harmony Project was created. For 36 years, The Project has inspired a community of artists dedicated to this mission motivated by a desire to support stories of hope, optimism, and the resiliency of the human spirit.

In 2018, The New Harmony Project embarked on an ambitious expansion of programmatic offerings in an effort to broaden its reach and deepen its impact. In the two years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization grew from 14 days of programming to over 100 days. We began offering workshops, expanded opportunities in Central Indiana, increased our budget by more than 70%, and explored new and exciting possibilities for connecting with artists and audiences alike.

As the organization rapidly increased its operations in 2018-2019, it became apparent that we needed new strategic directions to help guide the organization along a path towards sustainability. The board and staff began exploring options for a large-scale planning process in the winter of 2019 and 2020 and were prepared to launch a formal planning process in March of 2020. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, The New Harmony Project—like so many arts organizations—was forced into survival mode. The chaos and uncertainty of those early months of the pandemic saw many losses within our industry, and The Project was fortunate to have navigated the rough waters well.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

In concurrence with the COVID-19 pandemic, the world also witnessed a deep, intersectional outcry for justice led by Black activists and artists. This racial reckoning was brought to the forefront by the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbury, and so many others. We heard the demand for recognition of systemic failures, accountability for shortcomings, and meaningful, impactful actions to mitigate the harm so many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) artists had and continue to experience. As a result, we gathered a small group of board members and committed community members to audit our history; examine our commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access; and make recommendations for how we might begin the process of becoming an antiracist institution. What emerged from that process was a unanimous decision to fully integrate our equity and antiracism work into the strategic planning process. We were connected to Lisa Mount of Artistic Logistics and Keryl McCord of Equity Quotient via Nan Barnett at the National New Play Network, and subsequently contracted Artistic Logistics to lead this process. Samuel Morreale of Artistic Logistics joined the team, and facilitated the planning process in collaboration with Lisa and Keryl.

We began in earnest in March of 2021 with 12 hours of dismantling racism training facilitated by Keryl McCord. Throughout March and April of 2021, we convened a small strategic planning committee alongside the full board of directors for a series of four planning meetings. We subsequently established three task forces to focus on each strategic direction, with each group meeting 3-4 times to formulate detailed plans. In October 2021, we reconvened the strategic planning committee for a series of three meetings focused on reconciling and synthesizing the work product of each task force. Additionally, we met with Keryl McCord at two points throughout the process to ensure that we were centering equity and antiracism along the way.

This strategic planning process was driven by a need to build sustainable, equitable, and human-centered policies and practices. The board of directors, staff, and key stakeholders each reflected a strong desire to deepen the impact of the organization through thoughtful and intentional strategic decisions. The foundation of this plan is built on robust communication, clarity of purpose, and a commitment to become a more equitable, just, antiracist, and impactful organization.

MISSION & VALUES

OUR MISSION

The New Harmony Project is a national arts organization whose mission is to nurture writers in the development of scripts and new works that interrogate the complexity of hope. Through artist-centered programming, we care for writers so they can change the world.

OUR VALUES

- We will prioritize people over process, programs, or products.
- We will be just, equitable, and antiracist.
- We will build relationships that are authentic, mutually supportive, and in service to the needs of each person and project.
- We will build community by connecting people to themselves and one another.
- We will hold ourselves accountable.

THE PROCESS

The impetus for the planning process was driven by a need to build sustainable, equitable, and human-centered policies and practices to support the long-term viability of The New Harmony Project. Our process began in March of 2021 with an organization-wide analysis and assessment of our current operations. From here, we completed dismantling racism training facilitated by Keryl McCord and her team. Our board, staff, and strategic planning committee then gathered to articulate a 10-year vision for The New Harmony Project, each group reflecting a strong desire to deepen the impact of the organization through thoughtful and intentional strategic decisions. These conversations formed a foundation centered around building an antiracist, mission-driven, impactful organization that deeply values the cultivation of a generous community, sustainability, and highly effective operations.

THIS PLAN WILL GUIDE US FROM...	AND MOVE US TO...
Homogeny	Equity
Scarcity	Abundance
Traditional	Visionary
Ambiguity	Clarity
Volatile	Sustainable
Reactive	Responsive

THE VISION

THE NEW HARMONY PROJECT

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STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2027
People are the priority of this plan

Strategic Direction 1
PRIORITIZING AN
EQUITABLE, INTERSECTIONAL
ANTIRACIST ETHOS
AND PRACTICE

GOAL 1
Become an antiracist organization

GOAL 2
Ensure a majority of board, staff, and participants are from excluded and under-represented communities

GOAL 3
Use all spaces and gatherings to generate meaningful belonging

Strategic Direction 2
REIMAGINING AND
MOBILIZING BOARD, STAFF
AND RESOURCES TO SERVE OUR
CORE PURPOSE

GOAL 1
Build a transformational board of directors

GOAL 2
Empower and expand staff

GOAL 3
Generate strategic resources

Strategic Direction 3
CULTIVATING MEANINGFUL
COMMUNITY THROUGH
PEOPLE, PROGRAMMING
AND PROCESSES

GOAL 3
Embed belonging, transparency, and consistency into NHP's programming processes

GOAL 2
Build programs that embody our mission and values

GOAL 1
Provide support and care for the NHP community

For more than three decades, The New Harmony Project has served as a **wellspring of creativity**, providing vitally important developmental support to writers and artists as they move through their creative journeys.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

We have identified three key strategic directions that will guide us towards our ultimate goal of becoming a more just, equitable, antiracist, and impactful organization. Each strategic direction represents a key area of focus over the next 3-5 years, and will create an environment of clarity, accountability, and growth.

Prioritizing an equitable, intersectional, antiracist ethos and practice

A commitment to becoming a more just, equitable, and antiracist entity

Reimagining and mobilizing board, staff, and resources to serve our core purpose

A commitment to building sustainable policies, procedures, and practices

Cultivating meaningful community through people, programming, and processes

A commitment to intentional, collaborative, and meaningful engagement

PRIORITIZING AN EQUITABLE, INTERSECTIONAL, ANTIRACIST ETHOS AND PRACTICE

The New Harmony Project is cognizant of its history as a predominantly white institution, and fully embraces a commitment to becoming a more just, equitable, and antiracist entity.

Our first strategic direction is foundational to every part of this plan, and will be integral to every part of the organization as we move forward. Throughout our process, we activated opportunities to formalize this commitment to deeply embed antiracist actions into every aspect of the plan. We believe wholeheartedly in building a culture of respect and belonging, in dismantling systemic white supremacy, and in seeking out more opportunities to lead with a multiplicity of perspectives and voices.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

PRIORITIZING AN EQUITABLE, INTERSECTIONAL, ANTIRACIST ETHOS AND PRACTICE

GOALS

NHP will embrace and implement an institutional commitment to be an antiracist organization.

NHP will be an organization where persons from communities that are or have been actively and systemically excluded and/or underrepresented comprise the majority of the participants in NHP's governance, staffing, and programming.

In all of the spaces and ways in which NHP gathers people together, NHP will create and uphold an antiracist culture of meaningful belonging for all persons there.

SUCCESS METRICS

- Commitment to antiracism is embedded in all aspects of NHP's operations.
- We have implemented a robust conflict resolution process.
- We have implemented internal and external feedback processes to identify and address shortcomings.
- All policies, processes, and procedures are regularly vetted to ensure our commitment to antiracism.

- Majority of board, staff, and participants are individuals from systemically excluded or underrepresented backgrounds.

- We have embedded the philosophy that "No person is an island"
- We have established clear accountability standards
- We have established clear harm remediation standards
- We are centering and empowering individuals from systemically underrepresented or excluded communities.
- We are receiving consistently positive feedback from individuals who are engaging with our work.

OUTCOME

Deeply rooted and fully integrated antiracism practices are active and integral to our daily operations.

Building sustainable policies, procedures, and practices is vitally important to the long-term success of the organization, and supporting the core team is fundamental to that success.

This strategic direction manifests a need to establish sustainability as a core value for the organization. As a small organization in the midst of transition and growth, it is imperative that the way we operate is built on humane, achievable, and sustainable practices.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

REIMAGINING AND MOBILIZING BOARD, STAFF, AND RESOURCES TO SERVE OUR CORE PURPOSE

GOALS

Build a radical, compassionate, dynamic, and nurturing board of directors that is purpose-driven, equitable, and transformational.

Empower and expand staff to balance workload, diversify leadership, and support commitments to equity.

Generate sufficient resources to effectively support our mission, values, and new strategic directions.

SUCCESS METRICS

- We have reimagined how the board operates.
- We have consistent and meaningful engagement from all board members.
- We have well-documented roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- All board members are actively engaging with their networks on behalf of NHP.

- We have an employee handbook designed to reinforce a culture of belonging.
- Majority of staff are from systemically excluded or underrepresented backgrounds.
- Staff has clearly documented and defined roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Additional staff have been hired to meet strategic needs.
- We've implemented consistent evaluation processes.

- Our budget is clearly defined and growth focused.
- Revenue generation is sustainable and repeatable.
- We are creating an annual fundraising and development plan, and are consistently meeting articulated goals.

OUTCOME

Highly effective internal and external governance, operations, and communications strategies are embedded in all facets of the organization.

**We will fully embrace our role as a creative wellspring for everyone who interacts with
The New Harmony Project.**

Our third strategic direction focuses on the writers and artists we are engaged with, the programs that allow us to deliver on our mission, and the processes by which we create space for creativity to thrive. We will seek to build programs that allow people to return to the well when needed, and to be engaged through intentional, collaborative, and meaningful support.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

CULTIVATING MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY THROUGH PEOPLE, PROGRAMMING, AND PROCESSES

GOALS

Provide intentional support and care for the NHP community.

Build programs that embody our mission and values.

Embed belonging, transparency, and consistency into NHP's programming processes.

SUCCESS METRICS

- We are consistently listening to artists, asking questions, and responding with action.
- Community members are responding positively to the support that we are providing.
- We have embedded the philosophy that "no person is an island."
- We are consistently providing resources to those in the NHP community.
- We have developed a dynamic alumni program.

- We have defined and regularly review our mission and values.
- We have implemented a clear, values-based program development process.
- We have centered the needs of the artist into every program or initiative.

- We have created an intentional and transparent selection process.
- We have established an orientation protocol for all NHP programs.
- We have developed an artist-centered response tool.

OUTCOMES

Sustainable programming and artistic development with expanded relevance and reach are intrinsically tied to the communities we are creating.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This strategic plan represents a robust investment in the future of The New Harmony Project. We are shifting away from a “scarcity” mindset, and focusing on building sustainable structures that allow us to center the people who comprise The New Harmony Project in each decision we make. We are making commitments to pay people equitably for their time, and ensuring that a full culture of belonging is implemented immediately.

Financially, we’re approaching this plan in three distinct ways:

1. Revisit existing budget and rebalance based on new commitments. For example, ensure adequate resources are allocated to the spring 2022 conference to ensure our ability to provide responsive and personalized support.
2. Utilize current cash balance and resources to support immediate needs. For example, allow for deficit spending in FY22 to address strategic staffing or consulting needs.
3. Develop new resources to support these efforts. As we seek to expand programming in response to community needs, seek out funding opportunities and partnerships through intentional research and solicitation.

Looking ahead to FY23 and beyond, we will implement a full-scale, community-centered program development process that will result in the expansion of programmatic opportunities. **Our immediate budget need will be \$500,000** in order to build the structures and recruit staff necessary to realize this vision. We will build a comprehensive strategic fundraising plan to achieve this bold vision, and will rely on core supporters to successfully and sustainably expand.

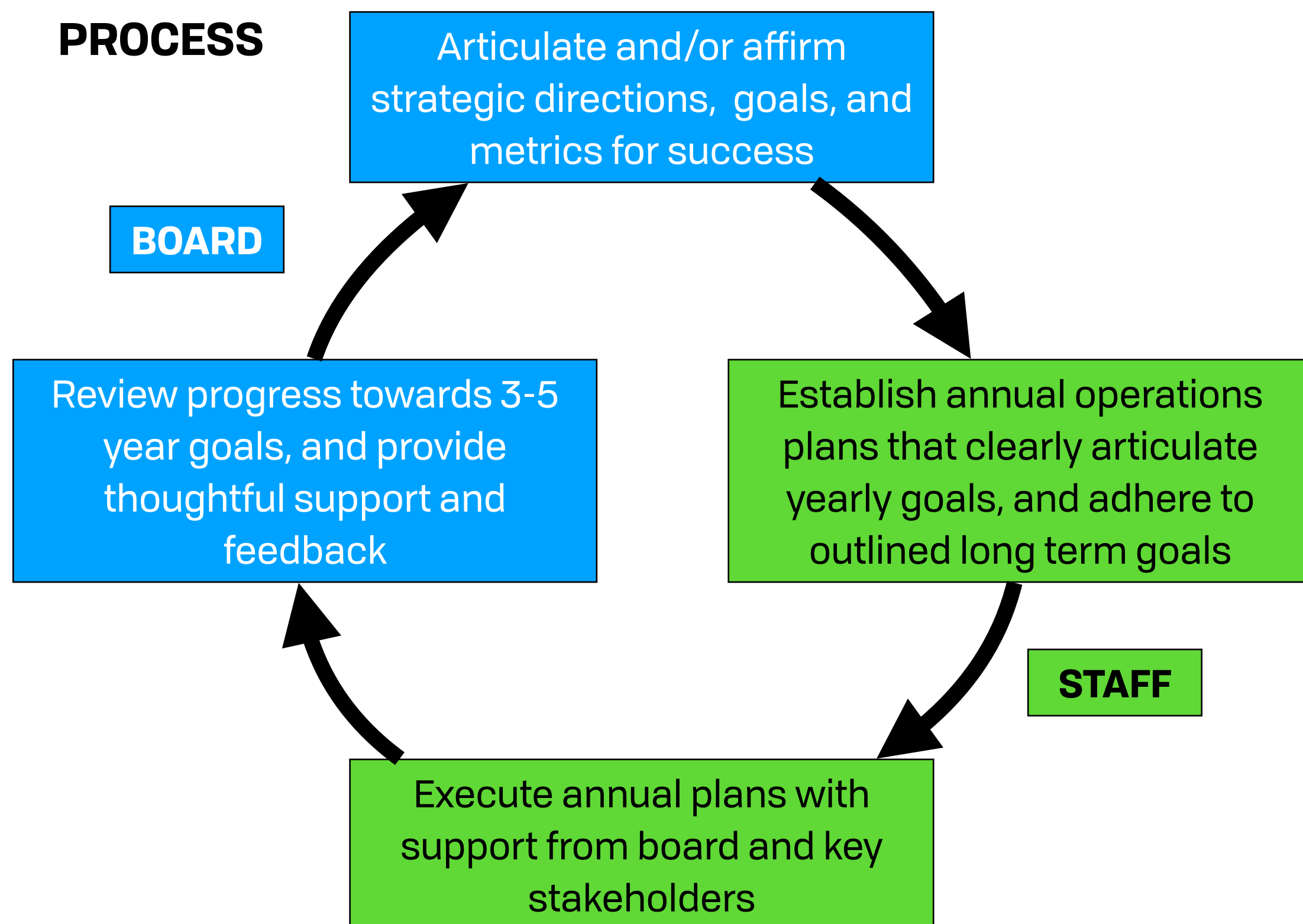
OUTCOMES

As we approach our fourth decade of supporting writers, **the foundational hypothesis of The New Harmony Project remains the same: *we believe that great writing has the power to change the world.*** This strategic plan simply expands the table to include those who have been systematically excluded or underrepresented throughout US history. We believe our role and responsibility is to create a space where people feel valued, heard, and represented. We believe that fostering a true sense of belonging is the only path to equity. We believe that by nurturing writers in the development process, they can change the world.

We return to a fundamental principle in the creation of this document: We are changing the ***who*** in order to change the ***what*** and the ***how***. To that end, the primary outcome we are heading towards is majority representation by systematically excluded and/or underrepresented voices across all facets of the organization. We will transform our board of directors, our staff, and our artist participants to meet this goal and achieve this outcome. We will build transparency and consistency into our communication, selection, and development processes. We will build a meaningful community with artists, partners, funders, and audiences. We will hold ourselves accountable to this plan, and will ensure that the values and ideas laid out here are utilized to track progress and make adjustments.

NEXT STEPS

This Strategic Plan provides the framework and the vision for The New Harmony Project to become a more just, equitable, antiracist, and impactful organization. The **three strategic directions** and **nine goals** outlined in this document form the foundation for an annual planning process facilitated by our senior leadership, and in collaboration with our staff, board, and key stakeholders. The purpose of this annual process is to prioritize objectives, strategies, and actions that will advance us closer to the realization of our 3-5 year goals. We will hold ourselves accountable to this plan, and will consistently monitor progress through annual reviews, thoughtful conversations, and a commitment to prioritizing progress over perfection. We recognize that needs will change, and we promise to evolve with the world.



PROPOSED TIMELINE

TIMEFRAME	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Q4 of each fiscal year	Establish annual operations plan	Staff led, with board and key stakeholder input
Q1 of each fiscal year	Execute annual plan	Staff led, supported by board and key stakeholders
Quarterly board meetings	Report on progress towards annual goals	Staff & board committee chairs
Q4 of each fiscal year	Review progress and adjust as needed	Board led, with staff and key stakeholder input

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES: PHASE 1

To begin, we have identified one priority objective for each strategic direction that is foundational to our future success. We intend to achieve these initial objectives by June of 2022.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Prioritizing an equitable, intersectional, antiracist ethos and practice

Reimagining and mobilizing board, staff, and resources to serve our core purpose

Cultivating meaningful community through people, programming, and processes

PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

Revise our mission, vision, and values to reflect our commitment to become an antiracist organization, and utilize these institutional pillars as a decision-making and accountability mechanism.

Clarify the roles, responsibilities and expectations of board and staff members.

Provide artist-centered support for participants at the conference, and ensure that “no person is an island.”

SUCCESS METRICS

- We have created updated mission, vision, and values statements.
- We use these in decision-making processes regularly and with increasing understanding.

- We have documented roles and responsibilities for both staff and board.
- We base evaluations on annual work plans, including a board contract.
- We regularly check in on the strategic and annual work plans to ensure alignment with expectations.

- We know what people want and need before they arrive.
- We’re consistently asking questions of artists, listening deeply, and then responding with action.
- Post conference surveys yield 90% “agree” or “strongly agree” to “my needs were met.”

OUR TEAM

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Lisa Mount, Artistic Logistics
Samuel Morreale, Artistic Logistics
Keryl McCord, Equity Quotient

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Vichet Chum
Blake Elliott
Ron Gifford
Donnetta Lavinia Grays
David Hudson
Lori Wolter Hudson
Nick McNeely
Tlaloc Rivas
Blair Russell
Phaedra Scott

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joel Blum	John David Lutz
Vichet Chum	Loui Lord Nelson
Ron Gifford	Blair Russell
Sarah Johnston	Judy Steenberg

EQUITY & ANTIRACISM TASK FORCE

Diana Burbano
Blake Elliott
Ron Gifford
José Cruz Gonzalez
Lori Wolter Hudson
Daria Miyeko Marinelli
Phaedra Scott
Sarah Slight

COMMUNITY & PROGRAMMING TASK FORCE

Vichet Chum
Ron Gifford
Donnetta Lavinia Grays
Lori Wolter Hudson
Daria Miyeko Marinelli

STAFF LEADERSHIP

David Hudson, Executive Director
Lori Wolter Hudson, Artistic Director

BOARD, STAFF & RESOURCES TASK FORCE

Rishard Allen
Blake Elliott
Jeremy Hatch
David Hudson
Jess Hutchison
Loui Lord Nelson
Blair Russell

MISSION & VALUES TASK FORCE

Vichet Chum
Ron Gifford
Donnetta Lavinia Grays
David Hudson
Lori Wolter Hudson
Daria Miyeko Marinelli
Blair Russell
Phaedra Scott

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