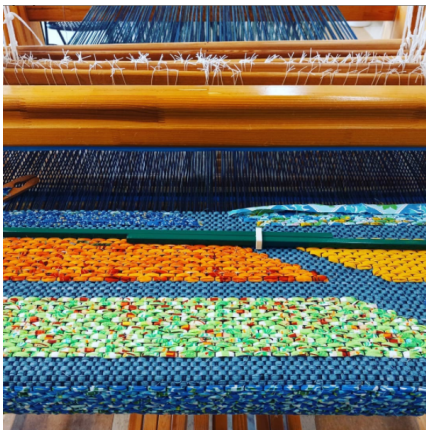




Weavers
Guild of
Minnesota

STRATEGIC PLAN: 2021-2025

"I love the Guild and all its support of Fiber Arts through classes and through the friendships I've been privileged to enjoy. I want it to continue forever so other people can find the same things there that I have found." --guild member in FY21



Approved by the Board of Directors September 23, 2021

Executive Summary

Purpose

With its rich eighty-plus year history of preserving and advancing the arts of weaving, spinning and dyeing, the Weavers Guild of Minnesota ("WGM") is embarking on a strategic plan that honors our past, builds upon our many strengths, and invests in innovative ways to serve our members, students and stakeholders. The key enablers to achieving our strategic plan--our Strategic Priorities--are fundamental to the success of WGM.

Strategic Priorities

In the next four years, WGM will prioritize the following areas: investing in our talent, enacting long-term strategies for financial sustainability, and leveraging data and technology to enable innovation. Embedded in these priorities is a focus on expanding diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility ("DEI-A") within the Guild.

The strategic focus on these fundamental priorities, along with a strong DEI-A lens, will position WGM to meet the needs of our community today and into the future.

Mission

Preserving and advancing the arts of weaving, spinning and dyeing.

Vision

The Weavers Guild of Minnesota is a member-driven arts organization offering innovative and high quality programming designed for weavers, spinners, and dyers of all skill levels.

We offer opportunities for community and connection based around shared interests.

"The Weavers Guild is an important resource for the weaving/ spinning/ dyeing community... The Guild provides classes, inspiration and opportunities for collaboration and meeting 'like minded' people. It has also been a very welcoming community... I am proud to be a member!" --donor in FY21



Core Values

We believe weaving, spinning and dyeing are fundamental to the human experience and welcome all who are interested in these arts.

We value and celebrate the rich textile traditions and practices of the past, present and future immigrant, migrant and indigenous communities who we serve.

We value a diverse and inclusive environment, and aim to serve as an exemplar in our community through equitable and accessible practices.

We celebrate and respect all individuals from beginners to seasoned artists and craftspersons.

We value a rich, positive culture that inspires lifelong learning in a non-competitive environment, nurturing a multi-generational community

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, GOALS AND ACTIONS

PRIORITY ONE: Optimize Our Talent Model to ensure stability and growth

WGM's talent is our most valuable asset. Our staff, volunteers, Board and faculty are critical to furthering the Guild's Mission and in efforts to meet our strategic goals. In supporting our talent, we ensure the long-term stability of the organization and strengthen member participation.

Goals

Ensure that: (a) WGM has adequate processes and norms for managing, training and developing staff, instructors, Board and volunteers, (b) WGM is adequately staffed to fulfill its Mission, and, (c) Guild processes, training, and norms support a diverse, equitable, inclusive and accessible environment valuing and seeking the participation of a broad representation of talent from the larger community.

Actions

- Evaluate and establish processes and procedures as needed.
- Focus areas:
 - Annual employee processes developed and implemented
 - Instructor training curriculum developed and implemented
 - Volunteer audit, orientation and training materials developed and implemented
 - Board and committee governance and training implemented
 - Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility into outreach/recruitment, hiring, professional development and promotion.
- Evaluate staffing needs and execute a search and hire to meet our needs.
 - Identify funding needs and secure funding to implement the staffing plan.
- Identify and onboard knowledgeable stakeholders, educational leaders and new faculty to broaden the scope and depth of WGM programming, in order to be more representative of the variety of weaving, spinning and dyeing traditions and practices of those we serve.

PRIORITY TWO: Ensure financial sustainability to enable investment in the Guild's continued success and growth

Using a deep understanding of the levers that drive WGM's revenue and expenses, we will prioritize our efforts to meet the needs of our members, students and stakeholders while ensuring WGM is financially sound today and in the future. Financial sustainability means our financial situation is predictable, we are able to adapt to the evolving needs of our stakeholders and the external environment, and we are able to invest in resources necessary for the Guild's growth and advancement.

Goals

Maintain consistent, predictable, and sufficient revenue to support the expenses of our services.

Align investment of financial resources to strategic priorities.

Actions

- Evaluate WGM's revenue sources and associated expenses taking into consideration the resources required to generate such revenue.
- Annually, analyze and prioritize WGM's revenue-generating levers taking into account available resources, the external environment, and member, student and stakeholder needs.
- Provide funding for strategic initiatives.
- Annually, develop and implement an annual plan that aligns the Strategic Plan goals and priorities with accountability measures.
 - Annually, report to members and stakeholders on the status of accountability measures.
- Develop and implement strategies to meet and fund annual diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility goals.

PRIORITY THREE: Develop and Implement a data and technology strategy that ensures stability and growth and promotes innovation.

The Guild's Mission challenges us to both 'preserve' and 'advance' the arts of weaving, spinning and dyeing. Wise investments in data and technology will ensure WGM continues to innovate in order to deliver relevant, accessible, and high-quality services. We seek technology and data systems to streamline Guild processes, deepen DEI-A advancement, and allow for technological innovations in Guild programming and services.

"The pandemic provided the opportunity, through online courses and meetings, to broaden the community to those who are not physically able to go to the Guild. I would recommend continuing online options for Guild activities". --strategic planning survey response

"I am loving being a member of your guild. Taking part in your online meetings and [online] study group has made a big difference." --new member in FY21

Goals

The efficiency of Guild operations is improved through the use of technology.

More extensive data is collected about our members, students, and stakeholders so that decision-making at the Guild is informed through thoughtful data analysis.

The expense of technology and data management systems is less than the benefits derived.

Actions

Create a data and technology roadmap for funding and implementation to improve Guild operations.

- Evaluate opportunities to increase operational efficiencies for staff through enhanced data and technology tools; prioritize implementation of tools selected.

- Benchmark how technology is used in other fiber-oriented groups and make recommendations to ensure the Guild stays relevant for current and potential members, students and stakeholders.
- Identify accessibility needs for students, members and stakeholders and acquire relevant equipment, materials, products or technology to broaden classroom and programming accessibility.
- Identify relevant equipment, materials, products or technology to broaden the scope and depth of WGM programming, to be more representative of the variety of weaving, spinning and dyeing traditions and practices of those we serve.
- Acquire relevant equipment, materials, products or technology to broaden the scope and depth of WGM programming, to be more representative of the variety of weaving, spinning and dyeing traditions and practices of those we serve, as prioritized and properly funded.
- Evaluate ways to use technology to better identify whom we serve and how to make our community more reflective of broader community demographics.
- Evaluate technology solutions to address the Guild's focus areas.
- Fund and implement as appropriate.

"WGM is a community of good-hearted people who share a passion for fiber. I love the joy that comes from sharing weaving and spinning knowledge."
--member response to *"Why do you support the Weavers Guild of Minnesota?"*



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the winter of 2021, the Board of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota embarked on the strategic planning process, forming a planning committee and contracting with DeYoung Consulting Services. Members of the Guild's Board, staff, and key committees engaged in the process, holding deep conversations about the state of the organization and the vision for the future. This document comes out of that engagement.

DeYoung conducted a series of interviews and surveys with members of the Guild's community--members, students, volunteers and stakeholders--to learn the current and anticipated factors impacting its future. Throughout, the environmental scan showed WGM's strong commitment to its members, its members' strong commitment to WGM, and the organization's pursuit of high quality educational opportunities. Binding it all together is a strong sense of community felt by those who participate.

Feedback from the survey, interviews, and insights from the strategic planning committee's retreat reinforced the need to enhance support for those who are deeply involved in guild operations, including its staff, faculty, and key volunteers. The Guild's continued success depends on ensuring that its base remains strong while expanding its reach. Financial stability and a growing and diverse membership are critical.

At the end of the current fiscal year (FY21), WGM is financially strong but the Covid-19 pandemic, which had delayed the Strategic Planning process, has demonstrated that financial security can change quickly. A detailed look at revenue sources and expenses will provide the information needed to accurately capture WGM's financial dynamics and inform sound financial decisions.

Technology will play a critical role in WGM's future. During the pandemic, the Guild seized the opportunity to use technology to successfully continue educating and facilitating new ways of connecting. As a result, new students enrolled in programming and new members joined the Guild, broadening the overall diversity of participants. The experience demonstrated that both in-person and virtual programming are needed to build and maintain a strong community and ensure the educational efforts engage with a broad section of learners.

Weavers Guild of Minnesota Strategic Plan 2021-2025 provides a roadmap of efforts to guide WGM to continued success. We hope you share our Vision: *The Weavers Guild of Minnesota is a member-driven arts organization offering innovative and high quality programming designed for weavers, spinners, and dyers of all skill levels. We offer opportunities for community and connection based around shared interests.*

"The friends I've made, the wonderful classes I've taken and the fabulous library we have access to are just some of the benefits of being a member... The Guild has been my sanity during these difficult times." --Board member feedback during Covid-19



FY21 Board of Directors & Staff

Linda Soranno, President | Celeste Grant, Past President | Amanda Anderson, President Elect | Matthew Schutz, Treasurer | Carol S. Carter | Barbara Daiker | Dawn Gillette-Kircher | Neal Goman | Melba Granlund | Barbara Heath | Mary M. Mateer | Sarah Nassif | Katie Oberton | Keith Pierce | Elizabeth Schutz | Beth Varro

Karin Knudsen, Operations Manager | Betsy Konop, Education Manager

WGM2025 Strategic Planning Committee

Linda Soranno (chair), Amanda Anderson, Maddy Bartsch, Celeste Grant, Anna Landes Benz, Karin Knudsen, Betsy Konop, Heather MacKenzie, Matthew Schutz

"WGM has made my life so much richer -- the classes I've taken and the people I've encountered have filled my retirement with endless stimulation." --member and donor in FY21



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