

**WDN STRATEGIC PLAN
2009-2013**

community
education
action

 **WDN** | Partners in
Progressive
Women Donors Network | Philanthropy
565 Commercial Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94111
Tel 415.814.1333 • Fax 415.814.1334
info@womendonors.org • www.womendonors.org

 **WDN** | Partners in
Progressive
Women Donors Network | Philanthropy

WDN's NICHE

WDN is a unique network of like-minded women. Membership combines the benefits of a nurturing social community with timely and relevant education, fast-response, high-impact collaborations, and strategic philanthropic initiatives. When a woman joins WDN, she grows in many ways: she amplifies her voice and the voices of other progressive women, and she leverages her influence and power as an activist and philanthropist.

VISION AND VALUES

WDN ...

- Recognizes the critical leadership role that women must play in shifting the society towards progressive ideals.
- Embraces the ideals of peace and justice, extolling the human rights call for full equity with respect to race; social and economic class; political perspective; gender; sexual orientation; and people with disabilities.
- Engages in movement building to effect systemic, sustainable, progressive change.
- Envisions a caring and balanced global society that is built upon the principles of democracy, generosity, diversity, trust, mutual respect, and the health and wellness of communities and the environment.
- Commits to the inclusion of diverse voices and interconnectedness as essential building blocks of a progressive agenda.
- Believes in a more equitable distribution of wealth, increased power and civic engagement for marginalized groups, and shared public responsibility to provide opportunities and services for those who are struggling.
- Values education, action, and community building.

This Strategic Plan recognizes that WDN's greatest asset is its members—and the amazing ways in which they combine their talents, ideas, resources and activism for the greater good. The secret is in how they do what they do, not just in what they do. Members model the behavior and culture of the world they envision: collaborating, trusting, thinking and acting collectively in ways that support building long-term relationships.

As WDN opens its doors to greater diversity, it will be invigorated and will share a common vision with a wider cross-section of progressives. WDN's success will depend on its appreciation for the richness of difference, interdependence, and mutual responsibility for the shift that must occur.

The promise of WDN's Strategic Plan is continued service to its members and the progressive movement, viewing issues through multiple lenses, crafting innovative and exciting solutions, and acting as a trusted and influential catalyst for change.

MISSION

WDN builds trusting relationships in a network of women with personal or familial wealth who are committed to building the progressive movement through the power of philanthropy, women's leadership, and collective and individual action.

STRATEGIC PLAN

In its first strategic plan (2003 to 2008), WDN articulated a mission, and identified three strategic goals: create community, deliver educational opportunities, and catalyze action.

This new Strategic Plan builds on WDN's uniqueness and extraordinary success as a women's network of activist donors. In the coming years, WDN will be more intentional about developing progressive women's leadership, preserving and strengthening the bonds within its community, deepening the quality and relevance of its programs, and positioning itself for greater impact and sustainability.

community education action

GOAL 1: Integrate Progressive Women's Leadership Development in all WDN Work

Background: WDN's experiences point to the importance of building women's leadership throughout the organization and in all sectors of society, including non-profits, government, politics, business, and media. Stronger women's voices and the confidence to exercise power are central to WDN's social change vision. WDN has also learned that the way women work together to solve problems and innovate is a unique and powerful tool for the movement. In the Strategic Planning process, these issues emerged as paramount for WDN's future effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES

- Use Community, Education, and Action Circles as vehicles for developing women's leadership
- Provide training to members who wish to exercise leadership roles either within or outside of WDN
- Seek collaborations with other organizations who train and mentor women leaders
- Support women's leadership initiatives in the larger progressive movement

GOAL 3: Deepen the Quality and Relevance of WDN's Action and Education Work

Background: WDN programs, meetings, conferences, and its Education and Action Circles are the mechanisms it uses to build community, develop leadership, and create social change. Programs and action activities will continue to deliver cutting-edge information and stimulate innovation and activism. Going forward, WDN will aim for a higher level of flexibility, integration and cross-fertilization among all of its activities.

OBJECTIVES

- Create a culture of responsibility, accountability, and learning
- Increase the intentionality, depth, and quality of program offerings, insuring strategic focus
- Work with allies and partners to achieve WDN's mission and increase effectiveness
- Incorporate diverse voices in programming
- Intensify program evaluation efforts, with special emphasis on member-funded Action Circle activities
- Support and include members as leaders in WDN programs and activities
- Design a new and more flexible collective funding mechanism for WDN-wide grantmaking
- Enhance the WDN website experience and its value for members and other stakeholders

GOAL 5: Establish a Progressive, Predictable, and Sustainable Revenue Stream to Support WDN's Plans

Background: To accommodate future organizational growth, and to provide for financial sustainability, the 2008 Strategic Planning Committee designed a progressively scaled contribution model, based on assets or giving levels. It was agreed that this model would be sensitive to the range of individual, relational, and family wealth within the group. The new model is progressive rather than regressive and replaces a model that asked everyone to pay their equal share, or "full cost," in contributing to the organization's operational budget.

OBJECTIVES

- Align WDN's progressive values with its financial structure
- Implement a new financial model to sustain WDN and support its continued growth and influence
- Maintain high standards of transparency, stewardship, and fiscal management while ensuring member anonymity and privacy
- Provide the resources for adequate staffing and operations

GOAL 2: Strengthen and Deepen the Bonds of the WDN Network

Background: WDN's membership benefits from the synergy created by an intimate community of women supporting one another and working together to elevate and exert their leadership on major societal issues. Each member engages to different degrees and participates at her personal level of interest. WDN is committed to the growth and diversity of its membership and to creating a safe environment that encourages all members to challenge themselves beyond their comfort zones.

OBJECTIVES

- Increase membership, achieving ten percent net annual growth over the next five years, with an upper limit of 300 members
- Strengthen connections among members, and between members and staff, to better serve members' diverse needs and increase their leadership capabilities
- Diversify the membership base with a focus on women of color
- Improve the cultural competence of WDN

GOAL 4: Position WDN for Greater Impact

Background: WDN has participated in building the infrastructure of the progressive movement. It has formed partnerships and alliances with like-minded groups and initiated its own innovative projects to fill gaps and address problems requiring rapid response. These experiences have highlighted WDN's value to the movement as an organization that moves quickly and nimbly with high caliber analysis and action. In the next phase of its development, WDN aspires to build on this reputation. It will increase its visibility, establish a media presence, have greater influence on the progressive agenda, and broadly apply a progressive gender lens to contemporary issues.

OBJECTIVES

- Elevate WDN's visibility in the progressive movement
- Apply a strategic filter to the selection of action projects
- Increase WDN's role where progressive strategy is being framed
- Identify organizational partners, including foundations, to leverage WDN's resources
- Preserve WDN's unique ability to respond quickly and act nimbly