



Western  
Museums  
Association

*Transforming the museum field through collaboration*

## **3-Year Strategic Plan**

**September 2016**

### **Guiding Principles**

These guiding principals will shape the goals and objectives  
in each of the plan's 4 areas of focus:

Programs  
Membership  
Governance and Operations  
Finance

#### **COLLABORATION AND OUTREACH**

*Through collaborative partnerships, WMA will support others in the museum field – including other associations – to strengthen the field's capacity.*

#### **CREATIVITY AND EXPERIMENTATION**

*WMA will serve as an incubator of ideas for the museum field through creativity in member engagement and program development.*

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## Programs

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### **GOAL:**

**The Western Museums Association will drive creativity in the museum field by serving as an incubator of ideas.**

The WMA Annual Meeting is widely regarded as a premier venue for those who work in the museum industry to gather, explore ideas, and network. WMA's programs will become a "laboratory of learning," where experimenting with ideas is encouraged through a supportive peer-to-peer network. In tandem with our own programming, we will celebrate good museum work and empower other entities in the museum field.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Create an Annual Meeting committee to foster experimentation within the Annual Meeting program by:
  - Seeking out and implementing new session/workshop/forum formats
  - Developing a safe way to take risks in programming
  - Developing an evaluation strategy to determine effectiveness of efforts/programs/formats
- Champion diverse voices and different perspectives
  - Cultivate the participation of students and emerging professionals
  - Cultivate the participation of indigenous and native communities
  - Create specific content relevant to aquariums, children's museums, science centers, and zoos
- Build relationships for future collaborations and to incubate ideas
  - Create a 'roadmap' for working with state/peer organizations
  - Create ways to support or sponsor localized programming and networking of peer organizations – especially in the Western Region
  - Partner with AAM's Professional Networks on programming and marketing
  - Develop more online resources

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## Membership

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### **GOAL:**

**The Western Museums Association will grow memberships (Institutional, Individual, and Corporate) through increasing our cross-disciplinary approach to professional development.**

The primary benefit of WMA membership is a discount to the Annual Meeting. To grow membership, we will create additional value in the WMA's programs. Our content will reflect diversity that exists within the museum field – in terms of both the type of institution and the perspectives of individual members.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Increase Institutional Memberships from aquariums, children's museums, science centers, and zoos, through inviting them to participate in WMA via conference presentations, program committee, and attendance
- Strengthen WMA's online user experience for member acquisition and retention

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## Governance and Operations

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### **GOAL:**

**The Western Museums Association will sustain a high level of professionalism in its governance.**

WMA's Board strives to have diverse representation. We will better understand and utilize the skill sets of current members and recruit new members with needed skill sets by developing stronger internal structures, policies, and tools to better guide the organization.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Ensure Board diversity
  - Create Diversity and Inclusion Statement
- Create strong internal structures
  - Review and update (as necessary) ByLaws
  - Establish clear descriptions, functions, and guidelines for committees
  - Review board election process
  - Build an internal evaluation process to measure progress and identify challenges/needs
- Plan for the future
  - Develop a succession plan for board and staff
  - Develop strategy to encourage creative/experimental programming

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## Finance

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### **GOAL:**

**The Western Museums Association will reinvest resources back into the organization to better serve our members.**

Having broadened our financial base and created adequate reserves to protect the organization, WMA will create budgetary pathways to reinvest additional funds (those above and beyond the necessary reserves) back in to the organization in support of the goals and objectives outlined in this strategic plan.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Secure reserves
  - Officially determine minimum reserve number
  - Review and update (as necessary) investment strategy for reserves
- Invest in the future
  - Determine process for determining board allocated funds
  - Increase marketing budget for Annual Meeting to raise attendance
- Grow revenue to ensure sustainability
  - Develop new earned revenue strategy
  - Develop terms for sponsorships