

PNPI's Strategic Plan (2023-2026)

Catalytic Growth and Impact



Introduction

PNPI's mission is to increase the knowledge, capacity, and diversity of federal postsecondary policymakers, leaders, and thinkers. We provide our community with a substantive and collegial foundation on which to build federal higher education policies that drive positive outcomes for students and their families. Fierce believers in individuals as learners and policymakers as agents of change, our foundational purpose is to educate. With our mission and core belief in mind, our 2023 strategic plan serves as a blueprint for strengthening our organization across four areas: programming, capacity, financial sustainability, and communications. It is designed to help us capitalize on our assets, strengthen our core offerings, expand our reach, and better serve our learners in the years to come.



Strategic Area #1: Programming

To ensure that PNPI continues to curate and grow a suite of programs that are high quality, customized to our constituencies, responsive to learner feedback, financially accessible, and have an impact on our participants' work and career trajectories, we will:

Regularly assess our programming's value and impact with an eye toward refinement, efficiency, and opportunities for growth.

- » Identify areas of programming that are worthy of expansion.
- » Identify areas of programming that should be scaled back or modified.
- » Identify areas of programming that are scalable and revenue-generating.
- » Identify needs in the field that are on mission and not being met.

Identify opportunities for partnerships that will help us serve our community more efficiently and effectively while increasing our reach and impact.

Robustly track and leverage data to inform and improve our work.

- » Operationalize our vision to ensure we are measuring impact beyond deliverables.
- » Leverage our alumni data to better understand our audience, follow their progress, and understand our long-term sector impact.
- » Conduct an organization-wide 360 for an independent view of how others see us, where we are succeeding, where we have room to grow, what data we are not capitalizing on or are missing, how we might improve, and what tools we need to push forward.

Identify ways to more intentionally embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our work.

- » Identify ways to embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our programming.
- » Identify ways to embed principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our internal and external processes.
- » Set and monitor diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.



Five-Year Aspirational Goal: In five years, we will have established a wider collection of programs and partnerships true to mission and vision; grown and strengthened our work with external partners; captured data that better informs our programming and practices; explicitly brought principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into our programming; and further contributed to the depth and diversity of the policymaker pipeline.



Strategic Area #2: Capacity

As PNPI grows, so must our capacity. It is essential that PNPI have the right people in the right roles, and that our staff and leadership believe in our mission, our vision, and the values and culture of our organization. To ensure the highest levels of capacity, we will:

Build a foundational structure for staff and leadership growth.

- » Strengthen our recruitment efforts to ensure we attract talented, committed individuals who represent diverse backgrounds and bring diverse perspectives to our work.
- » Continue to update and refine our formal staff onboarding plan.
- » Expand our commitment to professional development for staff and leaders at every level of the organization.
- » Develop short- and long-term plans for growing our staff with set conditions for growth.
- » Strengthen, grow, and formalize internal retention efforts.

Activate our Alumni Network.

- » Develop a plan for leveraging our alumni data to engage past participants in the design and delivery of future programming.
- » Develop a plan for engaging our alumni in identifying and recommending new program participants.
- » Develop a plan for leveraging alumni for brand awareness and development purposes.

Grow our teaching capacity.

- » Identify and adopt strategies that attract and retain a more diverse speaker base: individuals who are from outside the beltway, can offer varied perspectives, and are more racially diverse.
- » Strengthen opportunities for speakers to receive support and feedback before and after participating in our events.

Strengthen board capacity.

- » Provide board members with professional development opportunities that increase their capacity to serve the organization.
- » Institute a biennial board assessment to identify strengths and actionable points of improvement.
- » Cultivate a board culture that is generative, strategic, and collaborative with PNPI leadership and staff.



Five-Year Aspirational Goal: In five years, we aspire to have built a stronger foundation for staff, leadership and board member growth; a more robust recruitment and retention strategy; a more engaged alumni network; and a more robust and diverse speaker corps.





Strategic Area #3: Financial Sustainability

As PNPI grows its programming and staff, it must also strengthen and grow its funding base. Sustainability is a goal on which every component of the strategic plan relies. To ensure that our organization stands on strong financial ground, we will:

Refine our current financial model so that it is reflective of our four principles of sustainability: focus, right people, partnerships, and financial stability.

- » Set and monitor annual and longer-term fundraising and development goals.
- » Increase our funder base.
- » Incorporate revenue-generating ventures/programming into our financial model.
- » Expand efforts to fund PNPI's Summer Scholars and scholarship programs through individual donors and sponsors.

Ensure our financial model is true to our mission and vision.

- » Establish safeguards to ensure our financial model is reflective of our mission and vision.
- » Refine guidelines for the types of funders and donors we pursue and accept support from.

Create a plan for ensuring a robust level of reserves.

- » Set annual reserve goals.
- » Set explicit parameters for reserve use.

Create more explicit pathways for data to inform our fundraising and development work.



Five-Year Aspirational Goal: In five years, we aspire to have a financial model that is sustainable, data driven, true to our mission and vision, and ensures a robust level of reserves. It will guide how we maintain, grow, and think about our work.



Strategic Area #4: Communications

While PNPI is well known in our community, with the launch of virtual programming, we have recently begun to expand our reach outside the Beltway. A more robust and expanded communications plan will enable us to continue building our brand inside and outside of Washington, D.C., and open up further opportunities for expansion, partnership, and fundraising. To ensure we develop a communications plan that communicates who we are to new and more varied audiences, and supplements, builds on, and creates new opportunities for what we do, we will:

Evaluate our audience and identify new strategies for outreach.

- » Analyze data to better understand our current audience.
- » Leverage data to identify who our audience could be in the near and longer-term future.
- » Pilot new ways of reaching out to, communicating with, and engaging our audience.
- » Set and meet goals for audience expansion and engagement.

Revisit and refine our communications plan.

- » Revisit how our communications strategy can supplement, boost, and expand our programming, fundraising, and impact.
- » Create pathways for data to inform our communications strategy and social media practices.
- » Standardize our style across content and messaging.
- » Establish a narrative that further personalizes and simplifies how we talk about our work.

Strengthen and expand our social media and web presence.



Five-Year Aspirational Goal: In five years, we aspire to have expanded our audience, refined our narrative, used our communications to boost and expand our work, and grown our social media and web presence.

