



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Strategic Growth Plan 2018 – 2021

ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The American Guild of Organists (AGO) is keenly aware of the importance that strategic growth planning plays in our ability to chart a successful course for the future. The plan is the product of a collaborative process that was led by the National Council and included active participation by a planning group composed of a diverse mix of AGO stakeholders and staff. The process was structured and facilitated by 2B Communications, a consulting firm with extensive experience working with professional associations to develop strategic growth plans.

Key planning steps included:

- ▶ **Research:** Internal and external stakeholder interviews; online surveys of Chapter Leaders, AGO Young Organist members, and independent/dual Royal Canadian College of Organist members; findings from the AGO's 2014 Survey on membership.
- ▶ **Operational Review:** Of AGO's donor, membership and financial/budget trends.
- ▶ **Facilitated Planning Sessions:** In-person, collaborative planning meetings in October 2017 and January 2018.
- ▶ **Plan Refinement:** Feedback and refinement steps after each planning session.
- ▶ **Approval:** Plan approval by the National Council on April 27, 2018.

During the in-person planning sessions and subsequent review and refinement cycles, the National Council and planning group thoroughly reviewed and vetted the research findings, engaged in robust discussions about the core issues facing the organization, and arrived at the AGO's top areas of focus for the upcoming three years. The AGO staff and National Council, in collaboration with its National Committees, Task Forces and Chapters, will share responsibility for implementing the plan.

SUPPORTING OUR VISION AND MISSION

The multi-step approach was designed to yield an actionable, three-year Strategic Growth Plan that will help the AGO fulfill its vision and mission:

The vision of the American Guild of Organists is to engage, support and uplift every organist.

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ.

**Our plan builds
on our strengths,
promotes
organizational
stability and
fosters growth.**

Goals and Strategies

| GOALS | KEY STRATEGIES |
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| <p>CHAPTERS Ensure an excellent member experience across all Chapters.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create and administer an assessment to measure Chapter vitality and to identify the characteristics and best practices of strong Chapters in a variety of settings. ▶ Increase opportunities for Chapter leaders to easily share ideas and best practices. ▶ Enhance and expand Chapter support services (e.g., Improve programs and technical/back-office support, implement a new staffing model). |
| <p>VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP Maximize the effectiveness of the AGO's volunteer leaders.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Streamline and improve the effectiveness of the AGO Volunteer Leadership structure (e.g., Identify other structure possibilities, evaluate current roles, create more focused goals for committees). ▶ Develop and deliver a proactive, high-quality, multi-faceted, and sustained Volunteer Leadership recruitment, training, and support program. |
| <p>MEMBERSHIP Increase membership satisfaction by enhancing programs and resources for all AGO members.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and implement a proactive, nationally-guided new member welcome and retention process. ▶ Expand online and in-person learning resources to meet the needs of members of all ages and levels who play pipe and/or digital organs. ▶ Evaluate the Certification program and adjust as needed to align with organists' needs and improve return on investment. ▶ Redesign and maintain the AGO website to improve content and usability. ▶ Evaluate and refresh the TAO magazine to ensure relevance for all members. |
| <p>COMMUNITY Continue to grow a vibrant, inclusive, and connected community of organists.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Strengthen efforts to identify and attract members of all ages and levels who play pipe and/or digital organs. ▶ Ensure that AGO communications consistently reflect the full spectrum of organists and their interests. ▶ Facilitate new face-to-face and online engagement opportunities for organists with common needs and interests. ▶ Explore creating a mentorship program. |
| <p>LEGACY/ ADVOCACY Promote the organ and organists in their historical and evolving roles.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Leverage national and regional conventions to raise public visibility (e.g., possibly change name from "convention" to "festival", work with local radio stations to deliver unique programs related to the organ). ▶ Create and implement programs to raise both visibility and support among current and new audiences (e.g., AGO members, potential members, patrons of the organ). ▶ Proactively seek media opportunities to publicize the organ and organists. ▶ Establish/continue partnerships with organizations that have shared interests. |
| <p>FUNDING & OPERATIONS Expand the AGO's capacity to serve Chapters and members through financial growth and revenue diversification.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop a robust partnership program that delivers high value to all participants. Expand fundraising programs with emphasis on major gifts and planned giving. ▶ Evaluate the current dues structure and potentially identify new membership categories (e.g., institutional membership, hybrid membership/fundraising). ▶ Upgrade the technology infrastructure to support national, Chapter, and member needs (e.g., replace existing Association Management System). ▶ Align staffing and update internal processes to support the successful implementation of the strategic plan. |