

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: SUMMARY

WORKING TOWARD A WORLD WITH HEALTHY, EQUITABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE ECOSYSTEMS, COMMUNITIES, AND ECONOMIES

The staff and Board of the Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA) are delighted to present our strategic framework. This blueprint builds on EGA's impressive history which began more than 25 years ago with a handful of environmental funders seeking greater collaboration and synergy, and today has expanded into the big tent under which hundreds of environmental foundations connect. As the world changes, we are mobilizing our efforts to address the stark challenges and fresh opportunities before us.

The Board revised and refreshed the original plan in 2014 as we reached the halfway point toward our ten year outcomes. The previous framework encompassed over 18 months of research and discussion with EGA members. While members' opinions and priorities vary widely, there are common themes. Please note the new outcome goal of catalyzing action which sprung from a robust conversation on the venue and/or voice role for EGA. The urgency of now is evident in the number of environmental stresses around the globe, and EGA continues to evolve to support our members in forging a path to a sustainable future.

Based on this research, EGA seeks to:

- Enhance the execution of our programming by sharpening our focus and priorities and improving our approaches, while retaining our fundamental model and operations.
- Strike a careful balance between responding ambitiously to the urgency and gravity of the moment and delivering tangible and measurable member benefits.
- Remain structured and detailed enough to ensure accountability and reliability, but nimble enough to allow room to take on new initiatives.
- Sustain and enhance what our members value most about EGA, namely: the connections to a broad network of grantmakers, the exposure to new ideas, the focus on strengthening the field, the chance to recharge, and the opportunity to work together to be stronger than in our individual efforts.

This document offers a graphic representation of how the framework's various elements fit together. Please join us in bringing this vision to life!



ENVIRONMENTAL
GRANTMAKERS
ASSOCIATION



EGA'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

MISSION

EGA works with members and partners to promote effective environmental philanthropy by sharing knowledge, fostering debate, cultivating leadership, facilitating collaboration, and catalyzing action.

VISION

EGA envisions a high-impact network of environmental funders working to achieve a sustainable world.

VALUES

As environmental stewards, we value the full participation of communities, organizations, and individuals and embrace the many forms of diversity, including ethnic, cultural, racial, religious, sexual orientation, economic status, physical ability and gender. Our work draws on the perspectives, opinions, and experiences of a broad cross-section of people. We consider this essential for the best quality work as well as for a fair and just society.

ULTIMATE GOAL

The ultimate goal of EGA and its members is a world with healthy, equitable, and sustainable ecosystems, communities, and economies.

GOALS FOR IMPACT

THE PLATFORM

Goal #1: Strengthen EGA as an institution

1. Expand membership and leadership to reflect the diversity and variety of environmental philanthropy.
2. Assure financial support for core programming and new initiatives.
3. Build capacity to sustain high quality operations and programs.

THE RELATIONSHIPS

Goal #2: Improve the Quality of Communications and Relationships among the EGA Community

1. Use signature programs (such as the Fall Retreat and Briefings) to foster action, coordination, and collaboration, as well as engagement with varied constituencies.
2. Stimulate participatory discussion and debate about key issues, strategies, and practices.
3. Highlight effective and/or innovative practices in environmental philanthropy among peers.

THE KNOWLEDGE

Goal #3: Increase Knowledge of Environmental Philanthropy and Priorities among EGA Members

1. Improve tracking and analysis of philanthropic resources devoted to environmental issues.
2. Promote greater understanding of the value of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in effective environmental grantmaking.
3. Expand the perspective of EGA members regarding the relationship between US and global environmental issues, agendas, and movements.

THE RESOURCES

Goal #4: Increase Resources from the Broader Philanthropic Community for Environmental Priorities

1. Increase funding for environmental issues by EGA members and others with shared values in the philanthropic community.
2. Promote practices that leverage foundation assets beyond grantmaking to benefit the environment.
3. Promote opportunities for engagement between philanthropy and the public and private sectors to advance environmental agendas.

ACTIONS / STRATEGIES

- Continue to actively seek a range of new members, representing the big tent of environmental philanthropy.
- Focus on retention of members, increasing support for priority themes, and member engagement.
- Maintain increase in annual revenue to support core programming; meaningful promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion; and institutionalization of enhanced member services.
- Increase staff capacity to meet growing scope of work.
- Identify and prioritize gaps and thorny issues in environmental philanthropy, and focus debate, dialogue, and information exchange on these priorities.
- Facilitate collaborative grantmaking to increase resources for environmental issues.
- Develop guidelines to direct the management and establishment of regional and issue-based funder working groups, facilitating both collaboration and dialogue among funders, and deeper partnership when appropriate.
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with new and existing affinity groups and funder networks that will provide added value to EGA members.
- Improve analysis, complexity, and tracking of how philanthropic resources are devoted to environmental issues through continued evolution of Tracking the Field.
- Collect and disseminate information and research on philanthropy and critical/urgent issues identified by the EGA Board and members, and highlight innovative philanthropic approaches and diverse leaders in the field.
- Commit to global engagement by weaving it into existing programming, evaluating projects with an international lens, and creating new learning opportunities around global issues.
- Continue to promote and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion internally and throughout EGA and the philanthropic community.
- Continue to build constituencies and conduct targeted engagement with key funders who support issues related to environmental priorities.
- Facilitate learning about best practices and lessons learned related to mission related investing and shareholder action, and utilize resources from partner organizations when possible.
- Inform, connect, and mobilize EGA members around public and private partnership opportunities to leverage resources for environmental issues.
- Work with membership on an action blueprint for catalyzing action through 2020.

2020 OUTCOMES

- EGA acts as a big tent, encompassing a wide range of issues and strategies, and prioritizing a rich variety of voices and viewpoints both within environmental philanthropy and beyond.
- There is greater diversity within the EGA membership, and more EGA members are incorporating, diversity, equity, and inclusion into their practices.
- EGA members are more effective, individually and collectively, at working to achieve a sustainable world.
- EGA is financially and organizationally sustainable and thriving.
- EGA members have greater knowledge of environmental philanthropy and improved ability to assess the impact of their work.
- More resources are available to advance environmental priorities.
- EGA catalyzes action to address the urgent environmental crises that threaten the planet and its inhabitants.

Over the years, EGA has continually built upon its enormously successful flagship event, the annual Fall Retreat, while developing other core programs and services. EGA has:

- Started and nurtured working groups and responsive projects;
- Held international, federal, state, and regional policy briefings;
- Published numerous research publications for members, including the peer-edited semi-annual EGA Journal and Tracking the Field reports;
- Evolved the Tracking the Field project into a dynamic resource analyzing member grants, including a real-time heat map;
- Developed a global distance learning program to further our commitment to working on environmental issues with an international lens;
- Organized a wide variety of lectures, site visits, leadership trainings, panel discussions, and countless other events;
- Maintained vibrant email listservs for the quick sharing of ideas and questions between colleagues;

- Implemented organizational reviews and strategic plans;
- Facilitated collaboration and community through the work of volunteer committees;
- And supported and challenged the membership in their work.

EGA also works with the Council on Foundations, of which it is a recognized affinity group, and other environmental and non-environmental affinity groups to build bridges and connect funders across silos.

This framework is intended to focus EGA’s efforts on initiatives that support and enhance your work as environmental grantmakers. We are especially grateful to those members who actively participate in EGA—you make our community the vibrant network that it is. Moreover, we appreciate the tremendous support and confidence our members and partners have offered us over the past 25-plus years, and look forward to our continued work with the myriad of individuals and organizations who share our commitment to a world of healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities, economies, and ecosystems.

