



Photo: Divine Ramazani

## Introduction

This plan outlines the mission and values of Design Workshop Foundation (DW Foundation) and sets forth the goals and strategies that will guide the Board of Trustees, Design Workshop employee-owners, and volunteers over the next five years as we engage with communities through time, talent, and resources. This document will be updated yearly and will be available to the public via our website, along with our annual Impact Report.

## History

Design Workshop Foundation was established in 2002 by Design Workshop, Inc., with founding board members creating a vision to leverage the resources of the firm in service to communities. Since our founding, we have supported a variety of projects with nonprofits and community organizations and provided thousands of hours in volunteer service hours.

Seeking to build on past efforts and grow DW Foundation's impact in a changing world, Design Workshop leadership recognized that a new, progressive approach was needed. In 2021, the Design Workshop Board of Directors made a significant investment to relaunch DW Foundation.

In 2022 the first Executive Director was hired to lead the strategic direction and vision for DW Foundation's relaunch and future efforts. The newly appointed Board of Trustees developed a new mission and vision, recruited an internal Foundation team, and launched three distinct impact initiatives. Currently, DW Foundation has seven board members and representation in every Design Workshop office from staff "champions."

DW Foundation continues to advance the vision of our founding board members by working shoulder to shoulder with communities to expand the reach of design, planning and placemaking services.



# Accomplishments

## Reflecting on 2022-2023

- Launched the Community Capacity Building initiative. Released a national request for applications and kicked off two projects: Northeast Houston Redevelopment Council, Kinston Teens (Kinston, NC).
- Launched a Design Assistance project for Hive Park (Lewiston Woodville, NC). Supported Design Workshop's Dr. Charles Fountain interns in the completion of the first phase of design.
- Increased brand awareness and shared compelling stories through enhanced online and social media presence.
- Engaged teams across Design Workshop offices in DW Foundation projects across three states.
- Held the first annual Design Workshop Employee Owner giving campaign.
- Appointed two additional Board of Trustees members.
- Partnered with ASLA at the National Conference for Dream Big in Design LIVE.
- Received an EPA Environmental Justice Grant with Green Dot Coalition community partners.
- Hosted an inaugural public fundraising event in Denver.



## Why do we do this?

- Reimagining who design benefits and who is considered a “designer.”
- Rectifying past harms inflicted by the planning and design industries.
- Attracting employees who want to work for companies that are committed to giving back and serving all communities.
- Growing future leaders among DW Employee-Owners.
- Working across all sectors and institutional barriers and center a multitude of voices, expertise and leaders towards the positive transformation of a community.
- Emboldening + empowering communities to grow leadership through their organizations.
- Providing opportunities to work with communities that we might not otherwise be able to support through the structure of traditional professional practice.



## Vision

Empowered and thriving communities for future generations.

## Mission

Design Workshop Foundation works in service to communities to catalyze transformative change through design assistance, capacity building and education.

## Values

Innovation. Collaboration. Co-creation.

## Goals

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Advance social, economic and environmental equity in the built environment.

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Build community resilience and social capital.

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Diversify perspectives in design and planning.

## Strategies



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### ***Deliver Impactful Projects and Programs***

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- Advance placemaking initiatives in under-resourced communities through Capacity Building support.
- Catalyze community-driven, mission-aligned site design projects that are equity-centered and public realm focused through Design Assistance services.
- Engage youth from diverse backgrounds in our mission-driven projects to support pathways for leadership and community advocacy, and open doors for future placemakers and placekeepers.

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### ***Provide a Platform for Community Voices and Stories***

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- Develop publicly accessible resources sharing best practices for supporting and advancing community-driven resiliency efforts.
- Share learnings and outcomes from our projects and programs through events, convenings, and targeted outreach efforts to the public and practitioners.
- Uplift efforts of our community partners and convene community experts to facilitate shared learning.
- Center varied and conflicting stakeholder voices and promote advocacy of critical issues affecting communities.

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### ***Engage and Educate***

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- Grow social media presence and develop strategic goals for posts and content.
- Launch Newsletter to be shared with internal staff and external audiences.
- Build out DW Foundation webpage and host resources, case studies, and stories to inspire others and share outcomes.

## Strategies

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### Leverage Design Workshop Resources

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- Create synergy with other DW initiatives like DEI, Legacy Design, MLK Jr. Day of Service, and others, to leverage the resources of the firm in service to communities.
- Take advantage of DW's long hallways where projects draw upon the strengths of the firm's teams and individuals, regardless of office location.

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### Create Ambassadors

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- Ensure all Design Workshop employee-owners feel empowered and part of the DW Foundation and can speak clearly to the Foundation's purpose, accomplishments, goals, and projects via:
  - » Internal newsletter
  - » Firm-wide progress updates
  - » Design reviews
- Forge stronger connections between DWF Board of Trustees and Foundation Champions team to cohesively administer DW Foundation strategies.

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### Raise Funds for Capacity and Sustainability

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- Host annual fundraising events.
- Cultivate diverse funding sources (individual donors, grants, corporate sponsors).
- Lead annual staff giving campaign.
- Build an endowment or long-term sustainable funding source.

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### Grow Strong Partnerships

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- Grow our network strategically and generate new partnerships, build and deepen existing relationships.
- Develop outreach strategy by studio.
- Host office workshops to brainstorm local initiatives and partnerships.
- Encourage staff pledge to establish partnerships.



## Get Involved

### Internal

- Represent your studio as Foundation Champion.
- Facilitate introductions between DW Foundation and Community-Based Organizations.
- Bring project ideas to your studio Champion or DWF Board member.
- Serve as a Design Reviewer or thought partner.

### External

- Leverage funding to support existing program areas.
- Supply financial or in-kind donations for program and project delivery, or events.
- Share ideas for community-led projects that DW Foundation can help advance.

**Donate:** Design Workshop Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization committed to co-creating thriving communities for future generations. Our mission-driven initiatives are made possible through generous donations. We are pleased to be supported by Design Workshop, Inc. Employee-Owners and Design Workshop, Inc., and invite you to consider a tax-deductible donation to grow our impact.

With the full backing of our collective resources, we can co-create inclusive places through community mobilization. Imagine what we can accomplish together.



## Contact

✉ [info@designworkshopfoundation.com](mailto:info@designworkshopfoundation.com)

🌐 <https://www.designworkshop.com/dwfoundation>

📷 <https://www.instagram.com/designworkshopfoundation/>

in <https://www.linkedin.com/company/design-workshop-foundation>



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