



Oral History Association

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

2020 – 2026 (six years)

Adopted October 2020

Extended October 2026

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MISSION STATEMENT, VISION STATEMENT, AND VALUES

Mission Statement: The Oral History Association (OHA) is a dynamic crossroads of ideas and people, connecting and inspiring practitioners, and supporting their work to ethically collect, preserve, share, and interpret memories which foster knowledge and respect.

Vision Statement: We envision a world where a deep humanistic understanding of the past, developed through a process of listening and mutual respect, shapes a more inclusive and equitable future.

Values:

- **Respect.** We advocate for a collaborative practice of oral history that values human experiences and promotes greater equity and inclusion in historical records.
- **Inclusivity.** We commit to creating an organization that values accessibility, inclusive practices, and diverse constituencies and perspectives.
- **Quality.** We promote our Principles and Best Practices to guide the creation, curation, preservation, dissemination, and interpretation of oral histories.
- **Sustainability.** We steward our field and organization to ensure that our work is valued and accessible.
- **Transparency.** We ensure transparent and participatory management of our association, accountable to all individuals and communities we serve.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION GOALS 2020 – 2026

Inclusive Engagement and Participation: The OHA is a transparent, inclusive, responsive, and valued resource with a growing body of diverse leaders and practitioners.

Field-wide Advocacy: The OHA is a nationally and internationally recognized advocate for oral history and a champion for the development and well-being of oral history practitioners and programs.

Programming: The OHA develops relevant, accessible, and innovative programming that enhances practitioners’ ability to do meaningful oral history work.

Organizational Excellence: The OHA membership, leadership, and executive office build a transparent and inclusive organizational structure that facilitates our mission.

Financial Growth and Sustainability: The OHA grows and sustains its financial foundation through prudent management of current income and investments, diversifying sources of income, and fundraising towards endowment growth.

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING GOALS 2020 – 2026

Inclusive Engagement and Participation: The OHA is a transparent, inclusive, responsive, and valued resource with a growing body of diverse leaders and practitioners.

Strategies
Make space that addresses the needs of people of color, Indigenous people, working class people, people with disabilities, and other people practicing oral history who have historically been marginalized.
Actively develop programming, representation, and/or reciprocal relationships with organizations that will help expand the body of oral history’s diverse leaders, practitioners, advocates, and stakeholders.
Diversify Council and other leadership roles through proactive recruitment and orientation, transparency around governance, and an inclusive and engaged committee system.

Build structures and resources to value and support service to the organization independent of individual external support.

Prioritize accessibility in our programming, communications, and best practices.

Field-wide Advocacy: The OHA is a nationally and internationally recognized advocate for oral history and a champion for the development and well-being of oral history practitioners and programs.

Strategies

The OHA develops relationships with funders in order to advocate for oral history and to disseminate best practices and ethical standards.

The OHA creates and disseminates a robust suite of advocacy tools and best practices that support practitioners throughout their careers.

The OHA participates in a variety of decision-making spaces across community, civic, industry, governmental, and academic spheres to raise awareness about the field and its needs.

Programming: The OHA develops relevant, accessible, and innovative programming that enhances practitioners' ability to do meaningful oral history work.

Strategies

Experiment with annual meeting formats to increase accessibility and diversity of attendance by expanding partner/stakeholder participation in program content, exploring non-traditional meeting locations, and implementing alternative models for program events.

Develop programming to provide professional development and networking opportunities outside of the annual meeting.

Partner with other organizations, including regional oral history associations, to provide programming and networking opportunities that enhance collaboration, community engagement, and oral history knowledge and practice.

Organizational Excellence: The OHA membership, leadership, and executive office build a transparent and inclusive organizational structure that facilitates our mission.

Strategies

Grow, diversify, and strengthen community within the membership, paying particular attention to the needs of emerging and under-represented practitioners.

Diversify Council and other leadership roles through proactive recruitment and orientation, transparency around governance, and an inclusive and engaged committee system.

Build Council, membership, and committee engagement through effective communication, transparency, and providing the resources necessary for all to meaningfully participate in the organization.

Ensure that staffing levels and compensation meet the needs of this strategic plan and that staff have the information and tools they need to excel in their roles.

Determine the most sustainable administrative structure to support OHA's work.

Develop organizational structures and procedures that allow us to be responsive to members' needs and concerns in all aspects of the OHA's work.

Financial Growth and Sustainability: The OHA grows and sustains its financial foundation through prudent management of current income and investments, diversifying sources of income, and fundraising towards endowment growth.

Strategies
Expand the ways we raise private funds from members and others.
Appoint a development committee to create an annual fundraising plan that supports OHA’s fundraising goals.
Cultivate relationships with foundations and federal funding programs for high visibility/high impact programmatic initiatives.
Actively seek collaborative partnerships for funding opportunities.
Regularly evaluate and optimize financial management in alignment with our values.