

GRANTMAKERS FOR EDUCATION
STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2027 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In partnership with Building
Impact



Building Impact



STRUCTURE OF PLAN: FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

This plan is organized to be implemented over a five-year period.

Foundational Elements

Vision, Mission, Theory of Action and Guiding Principles

Five-Year Objectives and Key Metrics

Big picture outcomes to be achieved along with time-bound measurable outcomes

Five-Year Strategies

The key levers that will allow the organization to successfully achieve its objectives

Some strategies are specific to objectives but most are cross-cutting in their application. Strategies have been divided into three groups: new work, continuing work, and work that will get sharpened in the new plan.

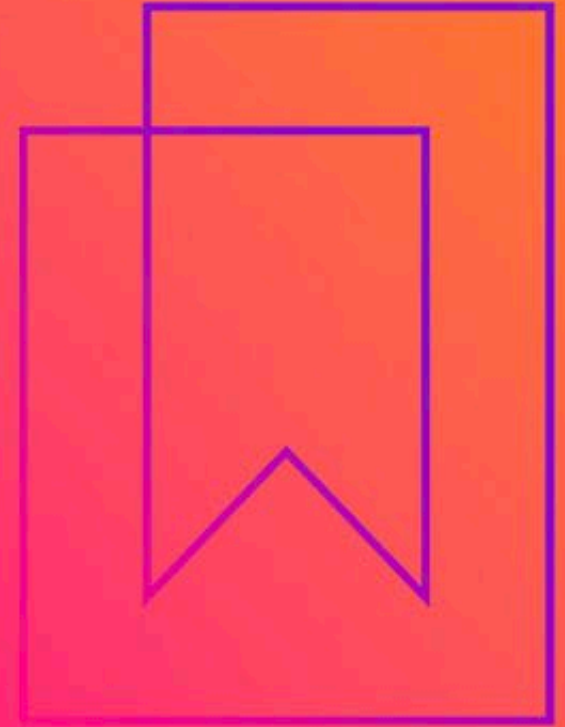
Illustrative Tactics, Operational Needs, & Other Considerations

More granular implementation details

This material is not included in the Executive Summary.

OUR NEW VISION:

Grantmakers for Education's vision is for all learners to thrive in education systems that are equitable and just, supported by funders who are equipped with the knowledge and connections to advance transformation.



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OUR NEW MISSION:

Grantmakers for Education catalyzes learning, fosters connections and creates opportunities for members to collectively advance effective, strategic and equity-centered grantmaking in the field of education.



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We worked closely with Grantmakers for Education Board and staff to better understand their perspective on the role philanthropy and of EdFunders in changing education systems to create the proposed Theory of Action below.

THEORY OF ACTION

We believe that the systemic inequities within the education system are a reflection of the inequities within our larger society and that education grantmakers should invest in solutions that address root causes. As Grantmakers for Education, we must maintain our direct focus on education issues, while making connections to larger systemic challenges that shape students' opportunities to learn and thrive.



THEORY OF ACTION

As a result, we believe our role is to:

- Pose questions and convene discussions that push the staff and board of foundations to reflect on their grantmaking practices.
- Understand the larger education landscape and ensure our members are well positioned to engage.
- Expose funders to innovative and equitable approaches to grantmaking within education.
- Catalyze education funders to take collective action.
- Create opportunities for education funders to collaborate, share successes and challenges and support and promote the work of communities.



OUR NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

WE UNITE FOR EQUITY AND JUSTICE.
Grantmakers for Education is grounded in an approach that centers racial justice because we believe most challenges facing the education system stem from foundational inequities within the system.



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OUR NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

WE INSPIRE BREAKTHROUGHS.

We are the largest forum in education philanthropy, a hub where new connections and ideas take root. We challenge the status quo and inspire new creative thinking.



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OUR NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

WE ARE A COMPASS.

We are uniquely positioned to identify key trends and insight into the “why” behind them, offering perspective that enables members to situate their work, navigate their world and enhance their impact.



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OUR NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

WE SUPPORT UNITED ACTION.

We link new allies and galvanize our members to take collective action – with other funders and with the communities they serve – which enables us to tackle bigger problems together more effectively.



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OUR NEW GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

WE CHAMPION THE CAUSE.

We are a steady advocate for positive change and a resource for expanding the visibility of members' work to advance justice in education and meet learners' needs.



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SUMMARY OF FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

By the end of 2026, Grantmakers for Education will have:

Objective 1 *Centering Equity*

Centered equity and anti-racism in our work, with this commitment guiding both our support for education philanthropy in its pursuit of equitable learning outcomes, and our support for staff and members in their own development.

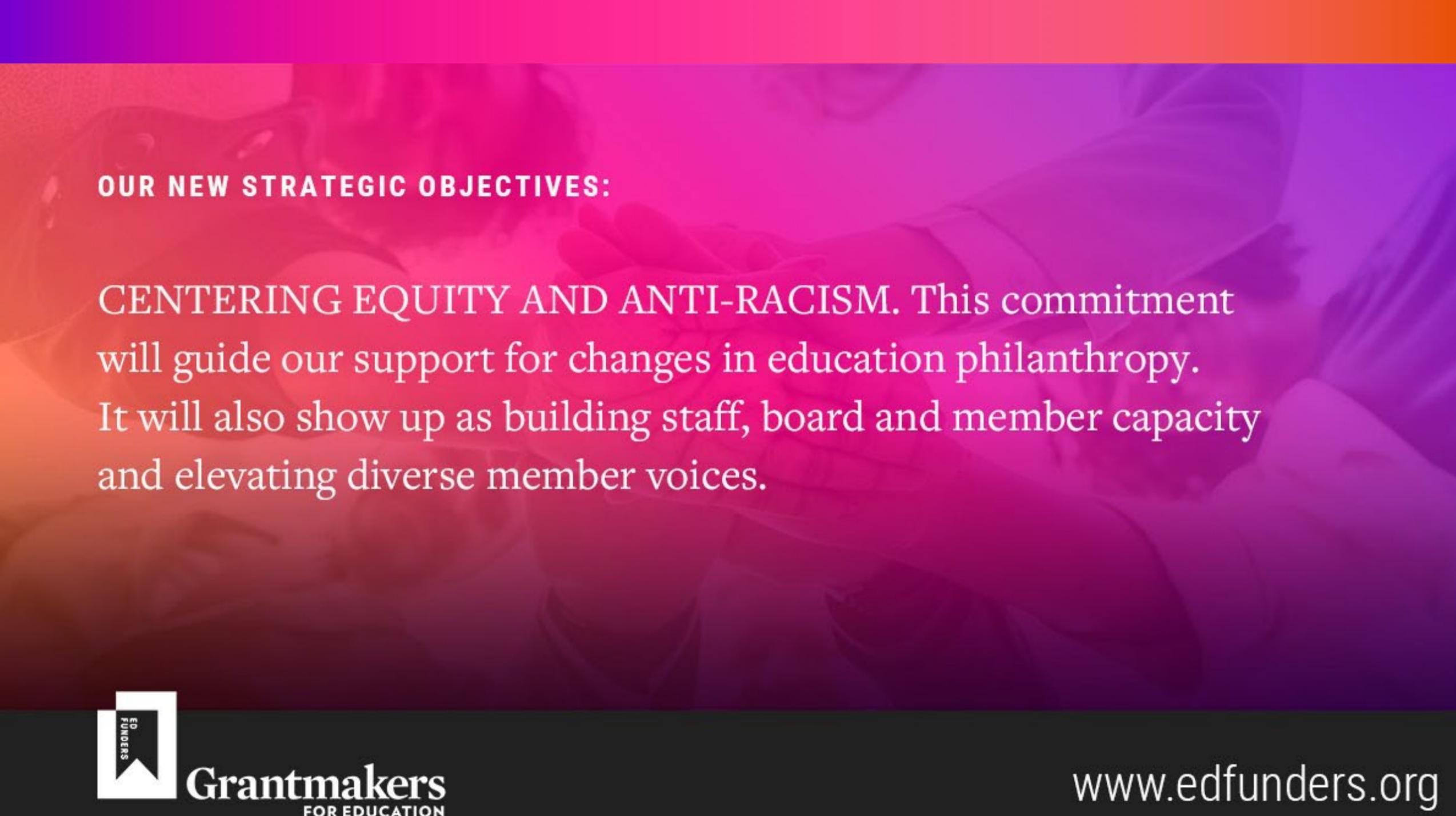
Objective 2 *Deeper Learning*

Focused our **programming to serve as a deeper learning platform** for building the skills, knowledge, and mindsets that support members investing in systems-level education change.

Objective 3 *Thought Leadership*

Expanded its role as an **education thought leader and partner** in strengthening funders' commitment to education and to moving education philanthropy forward.





OUR NEW STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

CENTERING EQUITY AND ANTI-RACISM. This commitment will guide our support for changes in education philanthropy. It will also show up as building staff, board and member capacity and elevating diverse member voices.



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OUR NEW STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

DEEPER LEARNING. Our programming will serve as a platform for deeper learning and connection among members. We will focus on building skills, knowledge and relationships that support members investing in systems change in education.



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OUR NEW STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP. In rapidly changing times, we will analyze cross-network trends and engage in partnerships to strengthen funders' commitments to education and their capacity to move the field forward.



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OBJECTIVE 1: CENTERING EQUITY

By the end of 2026, EdFunders will have centered equity and anti-racism in our work, with this commitment guiding both our support for education philanthropy in its pursuit of equitable learning outcomes, and our support for staff and members in their own development.

KEY METRICS

- ❑ 100% of Board and staff members engage in a structured exploration of equity in the context of the organization that focuses on individual and organizational leadership.
- ❑ Complete development of a shared vision for equity for EdFunders.
- ❑ Board and staff engage members to create and publish an anchor document for the field: Principles of Equity-Centered Education Grantmaking.
- ❑ 10% growth in member organizations led by leaders of color.
- ❑ 75% of survey respondents report knowing the actions EdFunders is taking to center racial equity in its work.
- ❑ 7% growth in the number of survey respondents who report taking action to understand and advance equity.
- ❑ Based on the survey respondents who are taking action, 7% growth in the number of respondents who attribute that action to their engagement with EdFunders.

OBJECTIVE 1: CENTERING EQUITY

RATIONALE

- **Alignment** - Equity is a central focus to many members; these members wish to see more prominent focus on equity reflected in the work of EdFunders.
- **Clarity** - Defining for the Board, staff, and members of EdFunders how equity is guiding its work will be an important step toward aligning key stakeholders around the organization's vision and mission.
- **Leadership** - EdFunders has the opportunity to provide leadership to the philanthropic community as a whole on how to make grantmaking more equitable.
- **Role of Education** - One of the most critical ways to address broader racial inequity is through education; education is a major lever in addressing issues of poverty and more.
- **Relevance to Mission** - At the heart of changing educational outcomes for learners is dismantling the systemic racism that impedes opportunity.



OBJECTIVE 2: DEEPER LEARNING

By the end of 2026, EdFunders will have focused our programming to serve as a deeper learning platform for building the skills, knowledge, and mindsets that support members investing in systems-level education change.

KEY METRICS

- ❑ 25% growth in the number of members participating in two or more programs with EdFunders.
- ❑ 25% growth in the number of members participating in 5 or more ways with EdFunders during the year.
- ❑ EdFunders offers at least 2 new multi-session learning opportunities annually (i.e. fellowships, city-based learning tours, web series).
- ❑ 92% of members renew their membership annually.
- ❑ 7% growth in the number of survey respondents reporting that their engagement with EdFunders has inspired them to increase their effectiveness.
- ❑ 50% of survey respondents report better understanding of the systemic issues at play in creating positive change in education.
- ❑ 75% of survey respondents report that they know the specific supports EdFunders provides and how to access them.
- ❑ 75% of survey respondents report that they are satisfied with their current level of engagement with EdFunders.

OBJECTIVE 2: DEEPER LEARNING

RATIONALE

- **Alignment** - EdFunders is already supporting members in this way, but sharpening its focus and increasing clarity and effectiveness will further align its day to day work with the mission and vision of the organization.
- **Theory of Change** - Meaningfully changing outcomes for students requires systems-level thinking on the part of education funders; EdFunders may be uniquely positioned to help identify and build those skills.
- **Empowering Members** - More sharply tailoring support to members will prompt them to take greater ownership of the work and foster expanded collaboration, as opposed to strictly relying on EdFunders staff.
- **Increased Effectiveness** - Research and data increasingly suggest that improving student outcomes requires a more intersectional approach.




OBJECTIVE 3: THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

By the end of 2026, EdFunders will have expanded its role as an education thought leader and partner in strengthening funders' commitment to education and to moving education philanthropy forward.

KEY METRICS

- ❑ EdFunders leadership presents at 15 conferences or convenings (sponsored by EdFunders, another PSO, or a EdFunders member) per year.
- ❑ EdFunders produces at least 10 thought leadership pieces per year (e.g. reports, briefs, commentaries, case studies).
- ❑ Establish 3 new partnerships with other PSOs or regionally-focused organizations.
- ❑ 50% of survey respondents report that EdFunders thought leadership or partnership has been helpful to their grantmaking.
- ❑ 75% of survey respondents report that EdFunders has served as a critical thought leader in the field of education philanthropy in the past year.

 Indicates this is a metric for 2022

OBJECTIVE 3: THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

RATIONALE

- **Value Proposition** - Customization and deeper experiences for members will create value that ensures EdFunders sustainability and essential role among education funders moving forward.
- **Identifying Trends** - Education funders are trending toward a more multidisciplinary approach to funding which could result in declining K-12 funding; EdFunders can play a catalytic role in keeping members invested in education while attracting new education funders.
- **Deepened Investment in K-12** - EdFunders can leverage its profile (in part through partnering with other PSOs, pursuing more focused regional work, or engaging in more collective action work) to expand interest and investment in K-12 education.



ADDITIONAL METRICS

In addition to measuring progress against the strategic objectives, EdFunders has goals around general organizational health, including the organization's biggest draw, the annual conference.

OPERATIONAL METRICS

- ☐ EdFunders meets annual budget goals with revenue exceeding expenses.
- ☐ 75% of staff are retained annually.
- ☐ 30 media stories per year on average by 2027.

CONFERENCE AND PROGRAM METRICS

- ☐ 750 conference registrants (virtual or in-person) annually.
- ☐ 100 programming opportunities (including in-person, the conference, and webinars) annually.
- ☐ 90% of members report positive feedback on programming.



Indicates this is a metric for 2022




IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (1 of 3)

The strategies below are new work streams EdFunders will implement over the next five years.

NEW INITIATIVES

1. Implement tailored DEI coaching and group learning in service of **creating an organizational DEI vision shared by the staff and board.**
2. **Align internal operations** to the strategic plan.
3. **Develop and distribute a topical podcast** that features members.
4. Where applicable, **align existing content and programs to reflect EdFunders shared vision for DEI.**
5. Recruit and **engage more members of color.**
6. Build a **competency model based** on the Principles of Equity-Centered Grantmaking to drive thought leadership and member support.

ALIGNMENT WITH OBJECTIVES	Centering Equity	Deeper Learning	Thought Leadership
	✓		
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	
	✓	✓	✓

 Indicates this is a work stream for 2022

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (2 of 3)

The strategies below are ongoing work streams EdFunders will continue to implement over the next five years or until individual projects are complete.

CONTINUING INITIATIVES

1. **Continue to offer and improve core services** including an engaging network-centered conference, impact groups, webinars, and research-based reports.
2. Launch a **revamped website** that **incorporates EdFunders new strategic plan** and builds the capacity to communicate effectively with members.
3. **Continue custom programming** for foundation staff (e.g. EGI, dSchool).
4. **Engage with members and clarify what member-led activities EdFunders will provide** directly and through member collaboration.

ALIGNMENT WITH OBJECTIVES	Centering Equity	Deeper Learning	Thought Leadership
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
		✓	✓

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (3 of 3)

The strategies below are work streams that EdFunders will adapt and sharpen to meet the objectives in this plan over the next five years.

SHARPENED INITIATIVES

1. Increase efforts to **draw on member expertise and feature member perspectives** spotlighting members of all sizes.
2. Expand efforts to **collect disaggregated data from members** and leverage results to design more tailored programming.
3. Based on member feedback and external circumstances, **deepen member engagement** through one or more of the following:
 - 3.1 Create opportunities/platforms to **engage in meaningful collective action**.
 - 3.2 **Create deeper learning experiences** such as fellowships or learning modules.
 - 3.3 **Expand regionally-focused programming**, including co-convening work with regional PSOs.
 - 3.4 **Deepen and create new partnerships with other PSOs** to generate thought leadership and develop deep learning opportunities for intersectional issues that affect education.

	Centering Equity	Deeper Learning	Thought Leadership
ALIGNMENT WITH OBJECTIVES	✓		✓
	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓
	↓	↓	↓