

Council for Court Excellence Strategic Plan 2022-2024

*Adopted by CCE Board of Directors
December 9, 2021*

Strategic Planning Committee

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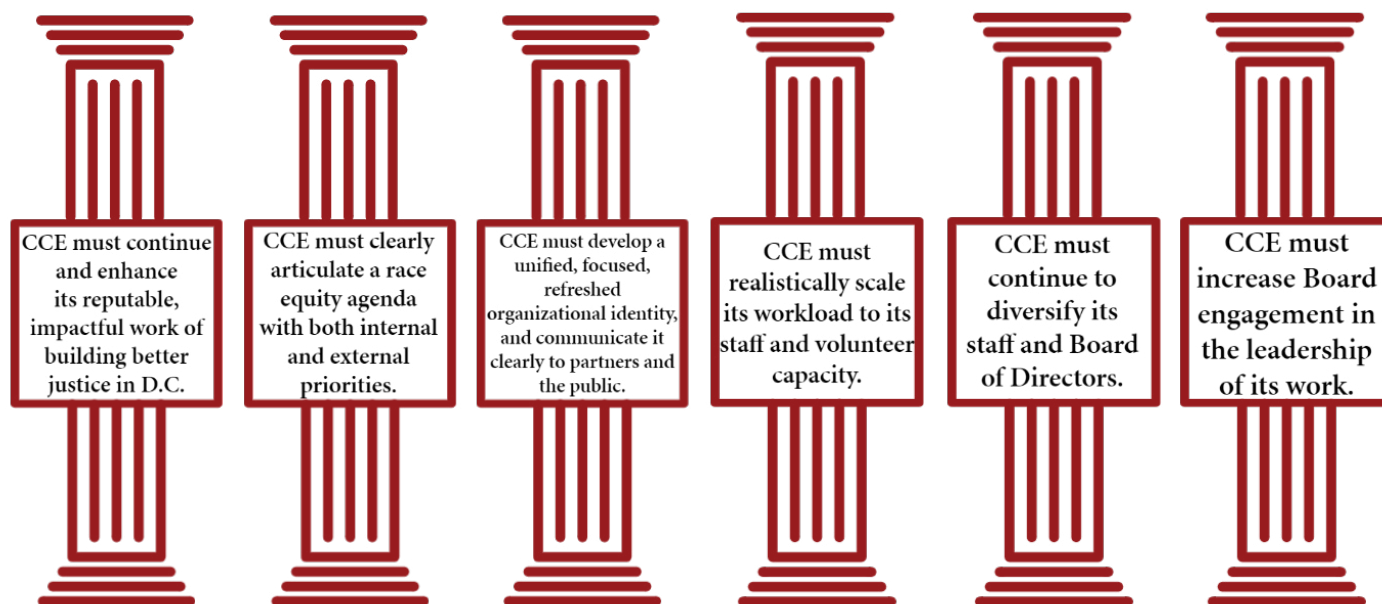
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2022-2024 Strategic Plan Pillars



INTRODUCTION

The Council for Court Excellence (“CCE”) will celebrate our 40th anniversary in 2022. In our four-decade history, CCE has evolved substantially. At our founding, the organization was principally focused on improving the administrative functioning of the D.C. courts through five standing Committees: Executive, Finance, Court Improvements, Criminal Justice, and Public Service (with a focus on education). Over subsequent years, CCE’s mission has expanded to encompass work across all justice system intercepts – including courts, executive agencies, and the community – in the areas of criminal, civil, and youth justice reform and education, and the standing Committees have shifted accordingly. CCE’s greatest impact has been identifying and proposing justice system solutions for D.C. by: convening diverse stakeholders to deliberate on important issues in our community; evaluating current systems through extensive research and study; making evidence and data-driven law and policy recommendations; advocating for change to advance policy; and educating the public and increasing civic engagement.

As CCE turns the page into its next chapter, we must focus on continuing to hone our strengths while also evolving to more effectively serve the needs of the people of the District. To do that, the Strategic Planning Committee convened from August to October 2021, developing a plan to help CCE build upon its legacy of impactful work while clarifying its organizational identity and right-sizing its staff and Board capacities. Moreover, for the first time, both CCE’s internal and external priorities will be approached with an intentional focus on race equity.

2021 Strategic Planning Committee Process

The 2021 Strategic Planning Committee (“2021 SP Committee” or “Committee”) approached its charge with an explicit focus on race equity and a desire to align the staff and Board Directors on key issues impacting the nature and scope of CCE’s work, as well as our larger organizational identity. It was apparent that, while CCE has done – and continues to do – important and meaningful work, our 40-year anniversary presents a unique opportunity to do what was described in the 2017 Strategic Plan but never fully executed. Specifically, the 2017 Plan directed CCE to:

“review, redefine, reassess, and in some cases reaffirm what CCE is about, with a focus on what we should do (the substance), who does it (the board, the staff, our stakeholders), and how to achieve greater quality, sustainability, and transparency.”

In particular, the 2021 SP Committee spent a great deal of time looking internally with an eye toward better aligning CCE’s values with the work we do, how staff and Board Directors contribute to and envision our work, and how we present ourselves to the community.

Historically, the focus of what CCE called “long-range” planning was conducted every five years and was exclusively programmatic, laying out the next set of projects for the organization to tackle. The 2016 Strategic Planning Committee was the first to develop a more comprehensive, organizationally focused 2017 Strategic Plan, which included the following priorities:

1. Strengthen the impact of CCE’s initiatives through strategic focus on our four program areas.
2. Diversify and grow funding streams, so that CCE becomes more financially secure and sustainable.
3. Increase CCE’s visibility and become more widely recognized as the go-to organization for justice policy issues in the District of Columbia.
4. Diversify board recruitment, engage current board directors, and cultivate new board leaders, so that CCE continues to capitalize on its robust pool of talented leadership.
5. Ensure an orderly, smooth leadership transition in 2017 and prepare CCE for any future leadership transitions.

The 2017 Strategic Plan expires at the end of this year.

As in prior years, the 2021 SP Committee included both Board Directors and staff. However, with 15 members, the 2021 SP Committee was considerably more streamlined than in the past. Board Directors were selected by CCE’s President and Executive Director based upon their varied past and present roles in CCE’s work, wide range of professional

and personal interests in CCE's mission, and diversity of lived experiences. CCE also retained [Co-Lab Consulting](#) to assist in this critical effort. Co-Lab began supporting CCE staff through racial justice dialogues in June 2021 before stepping into a facilitator role with the Committee. The 2021 SP Committee met from August to October 2021 and conducted its work in four phases: (1) reflecting on CCE's last strategic plan and implementation; (2) building consensus around CCE's values and goals; (3) drafting the plan; and (4) seeking review and approval of the plan.

First, to evaluate CCE's progress toward our 2017 Strategic Plan goals, CCE enlisted an Urban Leaders Fellow who identified four major themes in her [evaluation](#) that were used to frame the 2021 SP Committee's process. They included:

1. Reputable Work: CCE has a highly credible and respected reputation within the D.C. justice system and legal community and is known for producing high quality and impactful work for its stakeholders.
2. Organization Identity: CCE's mission, vision, and goals are not clearly understood or collectively agreed upon, even amongst the organization's key stakeholders. At times, the Board Directors and staff have not shared common objectives regarding the projects selected, the advocacy positions taken, and the public messaging about CCE's work.
3. Capacity Concerns: CCE's robust project workload in recent years is likely unsustainable with our current staff size and current volunteer engagement, without risking burn-out or compromised execution.
4. Board and Staff Diversity and Engagement: There is a desire for greater coherence between the Board and staff objectives, as well as a leadership and staff more reflective of the entire community affected by the justice system, and improved credibility within the community at-large.

The 2021 SP Committee used these findings to reflect on CCE's values, goals, and our plan to strengthen the organization and further our mission over the next three years.

The 2021 SP Committee completed three drafts of the Strategic Plan before submitting it for consideration by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee provided feedback and endorsed the Strategic Plan. This plan was adopted by CCE's full Board on December 9, 2021.

Overview of CCE's 2022-2024 Strategic Plan

The 2021 SP Committee identified several core questions for CCE to answer as we grow into our next chapter:

- What is our role in advancing justice in our community?
- What is CCE's commitment to race equity, and how does it inform all aspects of our work and other values?
- What, if anything, needs to change about how CCE makes decisions?
- How does CCE align its commitments with its capacity?

The 2021 SP Committee cannot answer these questions alone. CCE must, as a whole, assess and make decisions about our organization. The 2021 SP Committee sought to make recommendations for the processes, tactics, and timelines to meaningfully tackle this work. Because of this, the 2022-2024 Strategic Plan looks different than past versions.

The 2021 SP Committee identified six pillars for CCE to pursue in its 2022-2024 Strategic Plan:

1. CCE must continue and enhance its reputable, impactful work of building better justice in D.C.
2. CCE must clearly articulate a race equity agenda with both internal and external priorities.
3. CCE must develop a unified, focused, and refreshed organizational identity that infuses our values into our internal processes and external work, and communicate that identity clearly to partners and the public.
4. CCE must realistically scale its workload to be sustainable and to correspond to its staff and volunteer capacity.
5. CCE must continue to diversify its staff and Board of Directors.
6. CCE must increase Board engagement in the leadership and execution of its work.

It is important to note that, although articulated separately, these pillars overlap and are meant to be approached holistically. To achieve these important goals over the next three years, the Committee recommends that CCE appropriately scale our programmatic work and new projects to ensure adequate capacity for the staff and Board Directors to devote substantial time and energy to the internal priorities detailed in the Plan. Addressing these internal priorities is critical to CCE being able to successfully sustain and expand upon our programmatic work in the future.

Although prior Strategic Plans had five-year terms, the 2021 SP Committee determined that CCE would be better served by a three-year Plan in this cycle. This Plan seeks to prevent a continuation of the status quo, and instead envision significant organizational development over a concentrated period of time. With a shorter Plan duration, progress can be evaluated

sooner, and the work we do in the next three years can significantly impact future strategic planning efforts based on where the organization is then. By no means is three years the end of the work proposed in this Plan; rather, this is a Plan for what can be accomplished realistically in that time frame, with the understanding that the work will continue in other forms in the future.

Focus on Race Equity

During this Strategic Planning process and in other CCE meetings, staff and Board Directors have engaged one another in a number of challenging conversations throughout 2021. From these conversations, it has become clear that CCE must examine our work and internal processes through a race equity lens.

CCE must prioritize race equity because, in a city where Black people are more likely to be impoverished, more likely to go to court without an attorney, and more likely to be arrested and incarcerated, CCE cannot – and should not – continue to interface with the justice system in the District of Columbia without grappling with interpersonal, institutional, and systemic issues of race more deliberately and comprehensively.

Stakeholder members of CCE’s program Committees have called on CCE to center Black and directly impacted people in our work. While our research, policy development, advocacy, and education projects are highly regarded, and a variety of CCE’s past accomplishments have contributed to the goal of race equity, it is clear that CCE must do more to ensure that we approach our external work and organizational development with a race equity lens.

This decision to utilize a race equity lens is not intended to be simply a reflection of a moment in time, but rather a reflection of CCE’s lack of clear understanding or explicit agreement internally as to what our commitment to race equity should be, and the extent to which it should inform our work. Across the staff and Board Directors, there are real differences among individual views and understandings of what a commitment to race equity means.

We acknowledge that the traditional demographics of CCE’s leadership and the reality of inherent and implicit biases compel our reflection on how CCE makes decisions and selects priorities and projects. We are committed to focusing on CCE’s approach on these issues and to improving our knowledge and understanding of how to address race equity across our organization, including how we handle problems related to implicit bias or discrimination. Unless we specifically name these challenges, and do the work to be an inclusive and safe space, these issues will continue to have a negative impact on our Black, Indigenous, and people of color (“BIPOC”) staff, Board Directors, Committee members, and broader community partners.

In order to frame the Pillars and Goals in this Strategic Plan, the Committee agreed that, as an organization, we need to come to a common understanding of and agreement regarding the definition of race equity, what it means in theory and in practice, and how it applies to CCE's work. We use the term "race equity" frequently throughout this document. This is the Committee's working definition:

Race equity is both an outcome and a process.

As a process or lens, organizations apply race equity when the people who are most adversely impacted by structural racism are at the center of the creation and implementation of the institutional policies and practices that impact their lives, including the power to determine which solutions make the most sense, what counts as a "win" or a "loss," and ultimately how organizations can or should relate to their community. CCE can use a race equity process to look at both the procedural and substantive outcomes of our justice policy work and our internal organizational funding models, decision-making structures, and more.

As an outcome, race equity is the condition that would be achieved if a person's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how they fare. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of race justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them.

The Next Chapter

As an organization entering its 40th year anniversary, CCE has much to be proud of. To sustain our positive impact on the District and grow with our constituents, there is more work to be done. This Strategic Plan aims to build upon CCE's legacy of impactful work while clarifying its organizational identity and right-sizing its staff and Board capacities.

To be clear, this plan does not propose changing or overhauling the type of substantive work CCE fundamentally does. This organization plays a unique role in improving D.C.'s justice systems, and we should maintain that mission. But it is time to examine CCE's systems and approaches to make sure we are infusing our values and principles into all aspects of the work we do. There may be challenges ahead, but we can build upon our collective values and strengths to continue making progress toward our vision of a justice system in the District of Columbia that equitably services its people and continues to be a model for creating stronger and more prosperous communities.

PILLAR 1: CCE must continue and enhance its reputable, impactful work of building better justice in D.C.

There is a strong consensus, both internally among staff and Board Directors and externally with key stakeholders and community partners, that CCE does well-regarded and meaningful work improving justice policy, practices, and outcomes in D.C. Together, CCE's four substantive Committees ("program Committees") – Criminal Justice, Civil Justice, Youth Justice, and Justice Education – completed more than two dozen [projects](#) during the last five-year Strategic Plan period.

In our recent survey of external stakeholders, 75% agreed that CCE effectively engages community partners and programs, 76% agreed that CCE successfully delivers on its initiatives, and 91% agreed that CCE's initiatives positively impact people in our community. Among the Board and staff, 74% agreed that CCE effectively engages community partners and programs, 63% agreed that CCE successfully delivers on its initiatives, and 90% agreed that CCE's initiatives positively impact people.

Comments from interview and survey respondents included:

- *"Really well thought out and informed set of recommendations to informed issues."*
- *"Ability to get programming, studies and reports together that reflect the input of agencies and people from different sides of the policy spectrum."*
- *"CCE knows the landscape of the justice system very well."*
- *"Very organized and polished comparatively to other organizations of our size."*
- *"We bring people on different sides of justice issues together."*

The 2021 SP Committee feels strongly that this is one strength that CCE should carry forward into the new Plan. However, in order for our substantive work to be sustainable and remain impactful going forward, it is vital that we simultaneously take the steps detailed in the other pillars because of the growing need for a clear race equity agenda, focused and clarified organizational identity, realistic expectations for staff capacity, improved staff and Board diversity, and increased Board engagement.

For the following section, a CCE "project" is a broad umbrella term that could include any significant, substantive undertaking, such as community guides, research reports, or policy recommendations, as well as things like educational events, summits or convenings, and advocacy for the implementation of recommendations, among others.

GOAL 1: Each program Committee will develop a Program Plan for 2022-2024, including guiding principles, policy drivers, and proposed projects.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. New projects are guided by CCE's values, mission, vision, and clear policy drivers.
2. New projects are designed for maximum impact on significant and timely issues.
3. New projects are conceived of and executed using a race equity lens, in order to include considerations of inclusion and equity in project planning and execution.
4. New projects are tailored to staff and Committee member capacity, expertise, and interest.
5. New projects are financially sustainable.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. All program Committees adopt new three-year Program Plans.

- **STEPS:**

1. By March 2022, Committee Chairs and programmatic staff draft 2022-2024 Program Plans and make updates, if desired, to the committee's charter.
2. By April 2022, Committee Chairs circulate Program Plans for feedback among Committee members.
3. In June 2022, CCE's full Board reviews the 2022-2024 Program Plans.
4. Following adoption of new or updated organizational values, mission and vision statements (see Pillar 3, Goal 1), each Committee reviews their Program Plan and charter to be sure they adhere to Outcome 1 above.
5. Going forward after adoption, CCE and Committee projects are selected only after being evaluated using the Program Plan selection criteria, paying special attention to capacity issues.
6. In the last quarter of 2022, each Committee consults the Program Plan to develop its projects for the next calendar year.
7. In the last quarter of 2023, each Committee consults the Program Plan to develop its projects for the next calendar year.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff and Committee Chair time for drafting and review.

GOAL 2: Each program Committee will develop and execute a plan for recruiting and supporting the engagement and leadership of members who are directly impacted by the issue areas addressed in its Program Plan.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. Increased participation and leadership in CCE by people directly impacted by the policy issues being addressed.

2. Greater alignment of project process and substance with CCE's values and mission of equitable justice for all by incorporating more directly impacted people into our decision-making and planning processes.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. All program Committees adopt recruiting plans.
2. All program Committees welcome at least two new directly impacted members.
3. Directly impacted Committee members report feeling respected as Committee members, supported to engage in CCE's work, and empowered to advise and lead CCE's work.
3. Develop a mechanism for ongoing check-in and evaluation for directly impacted Board and Committee members to measure CCE's success in achieving inclusion and engagement, and make revisions as necessary.

- **STEPS:**

1. By March 2023, staff and program Committee Chairs should identify directly impacted groups and evaluate their current participation in the Committees' work.
2. By June 2023, staff and program Committee Chairs should identify any known or potential barriers to meaningful participation and collect information about the changes that would encourage and support greater inclusivity and participation in the Committees' work by directly impacted people.
3. By September 2023, staff and program Committee Chairs should draft a recruitment plan.
4. By January 2024, staff and program Committee Chairs should actively recruit new directly impacted Committee members.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff and Committee Chair time for drafting and review.

GOAL 3: Each program Committee will review and refine its charter, including purpose, roles and responsibilities of members, Chairs, and staff, principles and processes for engaging one another, and decision-making structures.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. Committee charters include clear race equity principles.
2. Per the work identified in Pillar 3 about organizational identity, Committee charters are aligned with CCE's new values and revised mission and vision.
3. Committee charters are aligned with CCE's revised roles for staff, Board, and Committee members.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**
 1. 100% of staff and program Committee members are aware of the charter and familiar with its contents.
 2. Charter is consistently used to guide Committee actions. Committee Chairs should provide twice a year reports to the Executive Director (ED) and the Executive Committee (EC) on their program and utilization.

- **STEPS:**
 1. Following the 2022 adoption of new organizational values, mission, and vision statements (see Pillar 3, Goal 1), each Committee reviews their Program Plan and charter to be sure they adhere to the outcomes above.
 2. By February 2023, Committee Chairs and staff draft revised charters to include clear race equity principles.
 3. By March 2023, Committee Chairs circulate charters for feedback among Committee members.
 4. By April 2023, Committee members vote to adopt revised charters.
 5. On an annual basis, starting in 2024, Committee Chairs, staff and Committee members review and revise charters as needed.

- **RESOURCES:**
 1. Staff and Committee Chair time for drafting, review, and implementation.
 2. Committee member time for review and discussion.

PILLAR 2: CCE must clearly articulate a race equity agenda with both internal and external priorities.

The 2021 SP Committee conducted its work with a race equity lens and aimed to infuse that into CCE's future policies, practices, processes, and projects. In particular, the question that needs to be answered is: *What is CCE's commitment to race equity, and how does it inform all aspects of our work and other values?*

Systemic racism, including implicit bias, is a national problem that pervades our society and institutions, but it is especially insidious within the legal system. The District of Columbia is no exception. Throughout D.C.'s justice system – criminal and civil – people of color, especially Black people, are disproportionately negatively impacted. For example:

- While Black people make up 47% of D.C.'s population, they make up 86% of the people arrested, 90% of the people jailed, and 95% of the people in prison. For people with a criminal record, punishment does not end when court supervision ends or when they leave incarceration. The collateral consequences of convictions, even for misdemeanors or for those with relatively shorter sentences, can have major impacts on the lives of D.C. residents, the District's economy, and its administration of justice.
- Students of color in D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) are nearly 15 times more likely to be disciplined than white students.
- Residents of color are more likely to lose their homes to predatory developers.
- Residents with limited English proficiency are less likely to access vital resources due to language access issues.
- In 2017 at D.C. Superior Court, 97% of plaintiffs in small estate matters in the Probate Division, 83% of plaintiffs in divorce and custody cases in Family Court, and 75% of plaintiffs in housing conditions cases in the Civil Division lacked counsel, and the majority of those were people of color.
- Residents of the Wards with the highest levels of poverty and unemployment have predominantly Black populations; across D.C., Black residents are almost eight times more likely than whites to be unemployed. Nearly 1 in 6 D.C. residents, about 111,000 individuals, live below the Federal poverty line. Poverty increases the likelihood of experiencing civil legal problems and makes it more difficult to address them and recover from negative outcomes.

CCE historically has been a largely white-led organization that has strived for diversity but not always succeeded in its efforts to include or center people directly impacted by D.C.'s justice system, who are overwhelmingly Black. Nor has CCE always responded effectively when holding individuals and systems accountable after instances of racism at or within CCE.

While we are specifically highlighting race equity in this pillar, we want to be clear that CCE maintains a commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) across this Plan and all of our work. We are committed to diversity across gender, disability, age, and other identities, which is discussed further in Pillar 5. However, CCE has significant room for growth in confronting racism and implicit bias, which is why the 2021 SP Committee felt it was crucial to highlight this concern and devote a distinct pillar to race equity.

To be clear, the Committee is not suggesting that we change our mission's focus from improving justice to focus exclusively on race equity issues. However, we cannot ignore how embedded issues of race are in D.C.'s justice landscape – and indeed, the U.S. justice system overall –, and it is important that CCE infuses our values and principles into all the work we do. This means ensuring that our organization intentionally considers all internal and external priorities through a race equity lens.

One important feature of CCE that sets us apart is our ability to bring together disparate groups of people from many sides of an issue to work together to improve our justice system. We certainly do not want to lose this quality. What we do want is to develop principles and processes for engaging in generative, respectful disagreement and debates over policy.

GOAL 1: Develop a shared understanding of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) principles and how to implement a race equity agenda at CCE.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. The staff and Board Directors have a shared understanding of race equity and its importance in CCE's work.
2. All staff, Executive Committee members, and Committee Chairs demonstrate skills necessary to apply a race equity lens to internal processes.
3. All staff, Executive Committee members, and Committee Chairs demonstrate skills necessary to apply a race equity lens to external work.
4. Discussions of race equity are normalized among staff, Board Directors, and Committee members through building comfort with difficult subjects; developing trusting relationships across race and power differences; engaging one another opening and vulnerably; and centering people of color, especially Black people impacted by D.C.'s justice system.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. At least 8 hours of training and facilitated learning required for each staff member annually.
2. At least 3 hours of training and facilitated learning completed by each Board Director annually, with CCE, through their employer, or independently.

3. At least 3 additional hours of CCE-specific training and facilitated learning completed by each Executive Committee member and Committee Chair.
4. Each staff member develops race equity metrics as part of their annual evaluation process and is assessed on their progress to reach their goals.
5. Each program and governance (e.g. Finance, Nominations, etc.) Committee develops race equity metrics in their charters and program plans as part of an annual review process.

- **STEPS:**

1. By March 2022, ED and Deputy Director (DD) lead staff to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for continued DEIJ training for staff and Board.
2. By May 2022, identify and hire a facilitator/trainer for continued DEIJ training.
3. By June 2022, staff and Board participate in DEIJ training.
4. By July 2022, Committee Chairs lead each program Committee to consider proposed race equity metrics in its charter and 2022-2024 Program Plan.
5. By October 2022, each program Committee establishes race equity metrics in its charter and 2022-2024 Program Plan.
6. In December 2022, all staff members develop and review their race equity metrics with ED and DD as part of the annual staff evaluation process, and ED provides metrics to the Compensation Committee who completes her performance review.
7. By March 2023 and each year going forward, Committee Chairs lead each program Committee to evaluate progress toward its race equity metrics and set new goals, as necessary.
8. In December 2023 and each year going forward, staff members evaluate progress on their race equity metrics with ED and DD as part of the annual staff evaluation process and set new goals, as needed.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Budget annually for facilitator/trainer for race equity training.
2. Staff time for planning, execution, and compliance monitoring.
3. Committee Chairs' time for planning and execution.
4. EC time for planning and execution.

GOAL 2: Adopt an organization-wide policy for addressing insensitive language, discrimination, harassment, abuse, and other inappropriate, harmful, or offensive behavior.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. Policy that provides a clear process for reporting and investigating reported behaviors at any CCE-sponsored meeting or event or by an individual acting in their capacity as a representative of CCE.
2. Policy that provides guidelines for accountability for individual actors and CCE as a whole.
3. An organizational culture that supports transparency, accountability, and repairing harm.

• **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. Policy is publicly accessible.
2. 100% of staff and Board are informed about the policy and acknowledge their receipt and understanding of the policy.
3. Policy is effectively utilized when incidents occur.
4. One year after adoption, solicit input about the policy's effectiveness in practice and in light of CCE's deepened understanding of DEI, and make any necessary revisions.

• **STEPS:**

1. By February 2022, ED and DD solicit feedback from staff, EC, and our external DEI consultant on proposed policy (previously drafted by members of the Civil Justice Committee in 2021).
2. By March 2022, ED and DD solicit feedback from pro bono counsel on draft policy.
3. In April 2022, the EC reviews and endorses a draft policy.
4. In May 2022, the full Board is provided a draft policy for consideration and comment.
5. In June 2022, the full Board considers and adopts a policy.
6. In July 2022, policy is circulated to all staff, Board Directors, and Committee members via email, posted publicly on CCE's website, and added to CCE's personnel handbook.

• **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff and EC time for review and revision.
2. ED and DD time to secure and work with pro bono counsel.
3. Pro bono counsel consultation.

GOAL 3: Develop a rubric for evaluating CCE's programmatic work through a race equity lens.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. Clear process for evaluating race equity of CCE's processes and approaches to programmatic work, including the collection of data, inclusion and leadership of impacted people, and framing of research questions.
2. Clear process for evaluating race equity impact of programmatic work, including framing of evaluations, recommendations, and advocacy campaigns.
3. Guidelines for staff, Board, and Committee members to engage respectfully in debates on CCE's project work and policy positions.
4. CCE consistently centers Black people, and other people of color, who are impacted by D.C.'s justice system in our research, policy development, advocacy, and community education work.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. Evaluation rubric is publicly accessible.
2. 100% of staff and program Committee members are informed about the rubric.
3. Rubric is used to develop 100% of new project plans.
4. Rubric is used to evaluate 100% of major publications before release.

- **STEPS:**

1. By December 2022, ED, DD and programmatic staff draft rubric and solicit feedback from program Committee Chairs and members.
2. By March 2023, program Committees adopt and utilize the rubric.
3. By March 2024, program Committees evaluate effectiveness of rubric and revise as necessary.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff (ED, DD and programmatic staff, in particular) and Committee Chair time for drafting, review, and implementation.

GOAL 4: Develop a rubric for evaluating CCE's organizational policies through a race equity lens.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. Clear process for evaluating race equity of CCE's organizational policies and practices, including but not limited to the personnel handbook, staff evaluation and review, teleworking policy, salary transparency, recruiting and hiring practices, and process for selecting contractors.

2. Creation of new organizational decision-making practices using race equity lens; evaluation and revision of existing organizational decision-making practices using race equity lens.
 3. Evaluation, revision, and/or creation of at least four organizational policies using race equity lens.
- **MEASUREMENTS:**
 1. 100% of staff, EC members, and other governance Committee members are informed about the rubric.
 2. Rubric is used to develop 100% of new policies and practices.
 3. Rubric is used to evaluate and revise at least four existing policies and practices (at least two per year after the rubric is created, with more to be addressed as capacity allows).
 - **STEPS:**
 1. By December 2022, staff drafts rubric and solicits feedback from EC members and governance Committee Chairs.
 2. By March 2023, staff, EC, and governance Committees adopt and begin to use the rubric.
 3. By April 2023, staff, led by ED and DD, selects four existing policies and practices to prioritize for revision in 2023 and 2024.
 4. From April 2023 to March 2024, staff and Board use rubric on all new policies and practices and at least two existing policies or practices.
 5. By March 2024, staff, EC, and governance Committees evaluate effectiveness of rubric and revise as necessary.
 6. From April 2024 to December 2024, staff and Board use rubric on all new policies and practices and at least two more existing policies or practices.
 - **RESOURCES:**
 1. Staff, EC, and governance Committee Chairs time for drafting, review, and implementation.

GOAL 5: Publish CCE’s race equity metrics and set up a transparent process to share progress annually and be publicly accountable.

- **OUTCOMES:**
 1. Publicly available race equity metrics and progress measurements.
- **MEASUREMENTS:**
 1. All racial equity metrics developed through this strategic planning process will be publicly posted on CCE’s website.

2. Report on progress toward all racial equity metrics will be updated and published at least once a year.

- **STEPS:**

1. By June 2022, the racial equity metrics will be shared with the Board. These metrics will be reported on and updated at subsequent Board meetings (similar to how programmatic and development work is reported).
2. By July 2022, ED and DD, with staff discussion and input, will collect all top-line racial equity metrics, and the Communications Manager will post them publicly on CCE's website.
3. By June 2023, staff will collect measurements, draft explanations of progress towards top-line racial equity metrics, and post them publicly on CCE's website.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff time for analysis and drafting.

PILLAR 3: CCE must develop a unified, focused, and refreshed organizational identity that infuses our values into our internal processes and external work, and communicate that identity clearly to partners and the public.

In CCE's 40-year history, the mission and scope of the organization's work have evolved substantially. As we prepare for the next 40 years, it is important that CCE clarify our values and mission, and then develop a new name and associated branding to accurately reflect our modern mission and scope of work.

An assessment of CCE's name and brand was originally recommended in the 2017 Strategic Plan. CCE created a Re-Branding Committee to lead this work, which found that CCE's brand identity is not clear to the community or even across the staff and Board of Directors.

Several specific quotes from participants of the 2017 Strategic Plan evaluation and re-branding interviews that were conducted in 2021 discuss this confusion:

- *“What is our mission?”*
- *“[I need more] clarification of our organizational vision and values.”*
- *“I do feel like ‘Council for Court Excellence’ is so vague I feel like I don’t even know what type of work it is describing.”*
- *“When you don’t know who they are, you may not know what they do.”*
- *“The Council for Court Excellence does not capture its work with the executive and legislative branch, it is not just about the courts, it’s about the system of justice more broadly and I think that’s what gets lost in the current name.”*
- *“CCE does not have explicitly stated values, and the gap between the apparent operating values of staff and board is ever-widening.”*
- *“I do think that sometimes the work that you all do tends to be so specialized that probably moment-to-moment people might wonder what your overall mission is.”*

It is important to clearly define an organizational values statement for the first time in our 40-year history, and ensure that CCE's mission and vision statements are adjusted, if needed, to integrate with these values. Each piece must be aligned with the others, and aligned with our work, in order to advance our organization and its impact.

A clarified organizational identity will also help bridge the gap between staff and Board members. Our decision-making and work focus should flow from clearly articulated values.

The lack of unified identity has also frustrated the purposes of various program committees because, without specific, stated values, it can be even more challenging to navigate disagreement and conflict. For instance, while several Committees have begun developing policy statements on racial justice, CCE does not have a single, organization-wide position.

Consequently, the Committees are deciding significant issues on an ad hoc basis without clear guidance from an organizational level. The Committees will work more effectively under the guidance of stated organizational values.

Finally, we should return to the re-branding and organizational identity work to consider a new name for the organization based on the values, mission and vision work. Clarifying CCE's identity is critical because the narrow scope of "court" and vague descriptor of "excellence" inhibits other areas of growth, like staff and Board diversity and engagement. The 2021 SP Committee recognized that if we lack consensus, even among staff and Board Directors, as to CCE's core identity and values, we likely are not clearly communicating our work to stakeholders, potential staff, Board Directors, and funders, not to mention the larger community our work is meant to impact. Clearer branding will make the organization more visible to people.

Within our organizational identity, it is important to answer the following questions: What is our role in creating justice in our community? Is CCE a think tank, an advocacy organization or both? If we're an advocacy organization, who are we advocating on behalf of? How important is consensus building to our role? What, if anything, needs to change about how CCE makes decisions? The greater clarity and unity of CCE's brand, values, mission and vision, the more effective we can be in our work.

GOAL 1: Develop CCE's core values and review our existing mission and vision statements to ensure that they clearly guide our work, and re-brand CCE with a new name that better reflects the evolution of our work, values, and identity.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. Our values, mission, and vision statements are aligned and utilized to guide and focus our work.
2. CCE's branded identity clearly aligns with our ongoing work and values, making it easier for external parties to understand CCE's role and impact in D.C.
3. Staff and Board have a shared understanding of the organizational values, mission, and vision.
4. Operating practices are re-aligned with CCE's newly articulated values.
5. The values, mission, and vision for the organization are clearly communicated to everyone involved in or impacted by our work.
6. CCE's branded identity is easily recognizable and helps to raise our profile in D.C.
7. CCE'S branded identity is consistent across all external facing platforms.

• **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. CCE's new values, mission, and vision statements are publicly accessible on our website.

2. Updated brand identity is identified, created, and communicated to all staff and Board Directors.
3. Updated brand identity is shared publicly via CCE's website, social media, publications, and all other communications.
4. CCE's values, mission, and vision are regularly and explicitly considered by staff and Board leadership when making decisions for the organization.
5. By the end of the Strategic Plan period, at least 80% of staff, Board, and key stakeholders surveyed believe CCE lives up to its stated values in both its internal policies and external work.

- **STEPS:**

1. In January 2022, convene the Re-Branding Committee to complete a draft of CCE's vision and values statement, re-branding plan, and name change proposals, based on the existing work to date.
2. By March 2022, convene the EC to provide feedback on the initial list of core values or brainstorm of core values; the responses will guide the small Re-Branding Committee's work.
3. By June 2022 Board meeting, share explicitly stated values, mission and vision statements for larger Board feedback.
4. By Fall 2022, elicit any additional feedback from the community to support existing re-branding work; consider allocating money in the FY2022 budget for focus group support.
5. At the December 2022 Board meeting, announce new branding.
6. By December 2022, finalize and publish values, mission, and vision statements on CCE's website and include them in key publications and communications going forward.
7. By December 2022, the Re-Branding Committee should also develop a roll-out plan for CCE's new brand identity.
8. Once finalized, update our website and social media with new brand identity and include in all public communications going forward.
9. In 2024, survey staff, Board, and key stakeholders to assess CCE's culture and alignment with values, mission, and vision.
10. In 2024, during the next Strategic Planning evaluation, respondents are queried whether there is a shared understanding on these between staff, Board, and key stakeholders.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Funding in FY2022 for focus group support.
2. Funding in FY2022 for re-branding consultant.
3. Funding in FY2023 for updating logo, letterhead, and all physical signage.

4. Funding in FY2024 for possible consultant for an organization/culture assessment.
5. Staff and Board time for planning and execution, particularly the Re-Branding Committee and Communications Manager.

GOAL 2: Complete a professional website redesign that better addresses the needs of CCE's many audiences.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. Website is professional, mobile-friendly, easy to read and navigate, and positions CCE as a leader in the justice reform space.
2. Website is easy to update by staff, without requiring dedicated technical staff or contractor support.
3. Website easily and quickly responds to the needs of D.C. residents seeking information about the legal system or CCE's suggested reforms, potential and current donors, potential and current Board Directors, media, policymakers, and others interested in CCE's work.

• **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. In 2024, a new permanent website with new branding replaces our temporary website.

• **STEPS:**

1. By March 2023, CCE hires a firm for a major website redesign.
2. By September 2023, website designers consult with staff to build new website based on CCE's new brand.
3. By December 2023, begin using the new website publicly as one piece of the re-branding roll-out.

• **RESOURCES:**

1. Funding in budget for full-scale website development in FY2023.
2. Staff and Board time for planning and execution, particularly the ED, DD and Communications Manager.

GOAL 3: Evaluate CCE's formal and informal decision-making processes and ensure that they are aligned with CCE's new stated values.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. Clarity around what decisions are made on a staff, ED, President, Officers, EC, Committee Chair, or full Board level beyond what is detailed in the organizational Bylaws.

2. When making any significant organizational decisions, leaders consult CCE's values and make choices to move CCE ever-closer to embodying its stated values.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. Significant and routine decision-making processes and powers are clearly articulated and shared with staff and Board.
2. CCE includes an explicit question in our Strategic Plan evaluation process regarding values-based decision-making.

- **STEPS:**

1. By February 2022, the EC and Committee Chairs will begin working with a facilitator to evaluate the Board's existing roles at CCE and determine ways in which it needs to change to meet the organization's priorities and needs, with particular attention to how decisions are made at the Board leadership level (see Pillar 6).
2. By March 2022, staff will evaluate existing decision-making processes (or lack thereof) to determine where there is insufficient clarity, where current processes do not serve CCE's best interests, and any remaining gaps.
3. By September 2022, any existing decision-making processes and recommended changes will be shared widely with the staff, EC and Committee Chairs for feedback.
4. By December 2022, any recommendations that would change or expand the decision-making responsibilities for the Board of Directors will be shared with the full Board for feedback, and approval if changes to the Bylaws are recommended or required.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. EC and Committee Chair time for planning and execution.
2. Some staff time, particularly the ED, DD and relevant Committee staff.
3. Board facilitator for FY2022.

PILLAR 4: CCE must realistically scale its workload to be sustainable and to correspond to its staff and volunteer capacity.

One theme that emerged from the Committee's evaluation of the 2017 Strategic Plan was how stretched thin the staff has been. While CCE produces high-quality, reputable work, it is at the cost of wringing the staff dry and risking burn-out. The current workload is not sustainable. We have lost – and are in danger of continuing to lose – valuable staff members as a consequence, and have experienced a particularly high attrition for Black staff members.

A disconnect exists between staff and Board experiences and perceptions of CCE. As one Committee member phrased it, “it’s almost like there are two versions of CCE: the staff version, and the Board version.” While we often talk about taking advantage of the skills, experience, and resources of CCE’s large, highly engaged Board to move projects forward, the reality is that only a handful of Board Directors are actively involved in CCE’s substantive work. In most cases, the bulk of the effort falls on four or fewer staff members who touch CCE’s programmatic work. (Although this bears further investigation to the trend, it seems as though Board Directors often don’t respond to more general calls for support -- see Pillar 6 on Board engagement -- and staff often lack the bandwidth to follow-up with more targeted outreach to specific Board Directors.) While new and existing projects are important, CCE needs a plan to increase its staff and realistically scale its workload to actual capacity.

GOAL 1: Expand CCE’s staff from six to ten.

- **OUTCOMES:**
 1. Increased policy, advocacy, evaluation, and analysis expertise and capacity among staff in each of our substantive areas of work.
 2. Increased community engagement expertise and capacity among staff.
 3. Increased capacity for ED and DD leadership and management roles.
- **MEASUREMENTS:**
 1. Ten full-time CCE staff.
 2. At least 10 hours per year are devoted by staff members to professional development, including subject matter specific training and/or general skill development in their respective fields.
- **STEPS:**
 1. By January 2022, fill CCE’s vacant policy position.
 2. By March 2022, expand CCE’s staff to seven full-time employees by adding one policy position.

3. In August 2022, expand CCE's staff to eight full-time employees by adding one recent law graduate fellowship position.
4. By June 2023, expand CCE's staff to nine full-time employees by adding one additional staff position in needed area(s) of expertise.
5. By June 2024, expand CCE's staff to ten full-time employees by adding one additional staff position in needed area(s) of expertise.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. ED and DD for planning and execution.
2. Budget considerations to be addressed in annual budgets. (The proposed FY2022 budget accounts for 6 existing staff members, 2 new staff members, and one new fellowship position.)

GOAL 2: Continue to diversify and grow CCE's funding, focusing especially on unrestricted general support funds.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. A clear, written fundraising strategy and plan that guides CCE's development efforts each year.
2. Improved fundraising operations infrastructure.
3. Greater quantity and amount of individual contributions, with a focus on major donors, planned/legacy giving, and monthly giving.
4. Increased general, unrestricted support funding from private foundations.
5. Increased corporate giving from law firms and businesses in sponsorships and general contributions.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. A documented fundraising plan on an annual basis.
2. To measure the ongoing success of the plan, the Development Manager and ED meets each quarter to review progress and make changes as needed.
3. CCE meets or exceeds our revenue budget goals each year.
4. Individual giving is increased to at least 10% of our incoming revenue in 2022; 12% in 2023; and 15% in 2024.
5. At least half of CCE's annual grant requests are for general operating support.

- **STEPS:**

1. In conjunction with budget planning, the Development Manager will draft the written fundraising plan between September and December 2021 (and in subsequent years).

2. By February each year, the Development Manager will share a written, finalized fundraising plan with the ED to guide our fund development efforts each year. By March each year, share with the EC and Finance Committee.
3. By June 2022, evaluate database (Bloomerang and Constant Contact) structure and identify needed changes. Develop plan/timeline for implementing database changes.
4. By end-of-year 2022, implement database structure changes. Develop protocols for database management. Develop criteria and protocols for adding new records and purging obsolete records.
5. In 2023, train all relevant staff on database operations.
6. By September 2023, develop marketing materials for a planned/legacy giving campaign, using CCE's new branding, and identify a pipeline of prospects. Develop protocols and tools for identifying, qualifying, and tracking prospects throughout the donor cycle.
7. By September 2024, develop a monthly giving campaign for mid- and low-level donors.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff, in particular, Development Manager, Operations Associate and ED, Executive and Finance Committee time for planning and execution.

PILLAR 5: CCE must continue to diversify its staff and Board of Directors.

The 2017 Strategic Plan prioritized the diversification of Board recruitment, as well as the cultivation of new Board Directors. Board and staff diversification and engagement were identified as “a big picture area for reflection.” An evaluation of our progress with respect to this priority found that initiatives had been established but had not been fully or consistently implemented.

In 2020, to gauge progress on the diversity goal, the Membership Committee surveyed CCE’s Board Directors for general demographic information. Although this survey was only completed by 72 respondents (40% of existing Board Directors), the numbers demonstrated that the make-up of CCE’s Board lacks diversity in a number of areas. For example:

- Only 10% of respondents were ages 18 to 39;
- 71.43% of respondents were White/Caucasian, and only one respondent was of Hispanic, Latinx or Spanish heritage;
- 61.11% were male;
- Only two respondents identified as Gay or Lesbian;
- No one identified as transgender;
- No one identified as a person with a disability;
- 91.67% of respondents have a graduate degree; and
- 56.94% of respondents live in Ward 3 (Northwest section including the Van Ness, Chevy Chase, Friendship Heights and Tenleytown neighborhoods) or Maryland; an additional 25% live in Ward 4 (northernmost portion of the city, straddling the northwest and northeast quadrants) or Virginia.

Although we did not receive a majority response rate for the survey, we believe that this data likely does reflect the general demographics of the Board of Directors accurately, which is majority male, white, professional, and older. CCE prides itself on being an inclusive (“big tent”) organization where diverse skill sets are valued. While efforts have been made to diversify and expand both staff and Board Directors during the 2017 Strategic Plan period, it is unclear how much, if any, success was achieved since CCE did not collect demographic information from 2016 and before.

For the last five years, CCE has budgeted for six full-time staff members annually. The majority of past and present staff members are white, and the average tenure of Black staff is shorter than others (0.8 years versus 1.5 years). While CCE should continue to strive to recruit diverse staff members, this data point also suggests that it is worthwhile for CCE to closely examine our hiring and salary policies, our workplace culture, and the ongoing support provided to employees to better ensure the long-term success and retention of Black staff members. CCE must ensure that staff members, particularly Black staff members and others with minoritized identities, can thrive at CCE.

As an organization that engages in advocacy on behalf of the community – and vulnerable, impoverished, Black people involved in the justice system, in particular – we would enhance our credibility and effectiveness if our staff and Board representation were more reflective of the demographics of D.C. and the people we serve.

GOAL 1: Diversify CCE’s Board of Directors across all identities and experiences.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. A greater diversity of perspectives, demographics, and experiences on our Board that are more representative of the community in which we operate and the people impacted by D.C.’s justice system.
2. A strong pipeline for the next generation of Board Directors from law firms and businesses that have historically supported CCE.
3. Board recruitment targeted to previously unrepresented organizations, including legal support businesses and nonprofit organizations aligned with CCE’s mission.

• **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. Based on [2020 demographic survey](#), increase by 5-7% representation of the following demographic categories on CCE’s Board each year:
 - a. Age: 18-29; 30-39
 - b. Race: All races, except White/Caucasian
 - c. Gender identity: Female; Transgender
 - d. Sexual orientation: Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual
 - e. Education level: all education levels, except Graduate
 - f. Residence: Wards 5, 7 and 8
 - g. Disability: Person with a disability
2. Based on [2021 current membership statistics](#), increase Law Firms and Businesses in need of an additional Board representative by at least 10% annually.
3. Develop a mechanism for ongoing check-in for directly impacted Board Directors and evaluation of CCE’s efforts and tactics to diversify, making revisions as necessary.

• **STEPS:**

1. By February 1, 2022, the Development Manager will update the 2020 demographic survey and send it to all Board Directors.
2. Follow-up with Board Directors as needed with a goal response rate of at least 80% by March 1, 2022. Repeat this process on an annual basis. Also update Getting to Know You paperwork to include demographic questions for new Board Directors.

3. Throughout 2022, the Membership Committee should consider how to create and implement a mentorship program for current Board Directors for newer associates in their firm or business; also to include developing methods or materials to convey how involvement in CCE's work provides meaningful experience for associates or more junior attorneys.
4. Each year within the first six months, the Membership Committee should identify organizations or associations that would be promising sources of diverse membership for CCE and make outreach for presentations or meetings with members in the second half of the year (e.g. National Bar Association, South Asian Bar Association, Women's Bar Association, the Washington Bar Association, etc.).
5. In the first three months of each year, the Membership Committee should identify long-time Board Directors who are likely to retire or rotate off the Board, and work with them to create succession planning for their firm/business if not already in place.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff and Board time for planning and execution, particularly the Development Manager and Membership Committee.
2. Possibly additional members of the Membership Committee if more tasks are going to be undertaken.
3. A better system of sharing network connections through full Board to utilize in soliciting new Board Directors.

GOAL 2: Build a leadership pipeline to recruit diverse Board Directors to Executive Committee and other leadership positions and support them in those roles.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. When considering nominations for the EC and other leadership positions, CCE has a robust pipeline of diverse potential candidates.
2. New and less experienced leadership candidates feel comfortable in the expectations and execution of their roles and supported by the organization.
3. Non-traditional Board Directors (such as those outside the legal or business sectors) feel welcome, valued, and are supported, where desired, to develop the skills and experience to serve in leadership roles at CCE.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. In addition to Pillar 5, Goal 1, Measurement 1 above, increase the same demographic categories by 10% specifically across the EC and Committee Chair roles each year.

2. Develop a mechanism for ongoing check-in and evaluation for directly impacted Board Directors to measure CCE's success, revising as necessary.

- **STEPS:**

1. On an annual basis, all Board Directors should be surveyed for their interest in ongoing governance and program Committees, and in particular, for any future leadership interest.
2. Members of the EC should follow up with those who express interest in leadership roles to discuss one-on-one what CCE Board leadership entails.
3. Establish a mentorship program for interested Board Directors to be paired with an EC member or Committee Chair to learn over the period of a year before moving into a Board leadership role.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff, largely ED and Development Manager, and Board time for planning and execution, particularly the EC.

GOAL 3: Develop policies designed to recruit, retain, and support diverse staff and interns.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. Targeted recruiting methods to reach diverse candidates across all identities and experiences.
2. Equitable and inclusive interviewing, hiring, and promotion policies and practices.
3. A strong, healthy workplace culture where diverse staff and interns thrive.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. By the end of 2022, there is an implemented hiring policy, consistent with CCE's values, approved by ED and shared with all staff members and utilized in future hiring decisions.
2. By the end of 2022, there is a documented salary transparency policy, approved by the ED and shared with all staff members and utilized in future hiring decisions.
3. Of new staff and intern hires, at least half expand the diversity of CCE's staff.
4. Increase average length of employment at time of staff departure from 1.25 to 3 years, and eliminate the tenure disparity between white and Black staff members.

- **STEPS:**

1. By June 2022, the ED and DD evaluate CCE's staff and intern compensation packages to ensure they are commensurate with skill and expertise, fairly compensate individual staff members for their contributions, and are competitive in the industry and region.

2. By August 2022, the ED and DD determine if an outside HR consultant should be hired to work on matters, such as hiring policy, salary transparency, staff retention, and building a healthy and thriving workplace culture for diverse staff and Board.
3. By the end of 2022, the ED and DD (with support from HR consultant if hired) has developed a hiring policy and has provided it to the EC for feedback.
4. The hiring policy will also be reviewed by pro bono counsel to ensure legal compliance.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. ED and DD with staff feedback as needed and Board time for planning and execution.
2. Funds budgeted and available for salary increases and bonuses that are commensurate with skill and expertise, fairly compensate individual staff members for their contributions, and are competitive in the industry and region.
3. Budget funds for HR consultant if needed.
4. Pro bono counsel to review CCE's hiring policy.

PILLAR 6: CCE must increase Board engagement in the leadership and execution of its work.

Another theme that emerged in the evaluation of the 2017 Strategic Plan was the current level of engagement from CCE Board Directors. The evaluator noted:

The 29% Board and staff [note: all six staff completed the survey] survey response rate is a query for future exploration. The low response rate may point to several factors, such as the survey's length or limited time window for completion [note: the survey was open for one week]. However, it probes inquiry about board engagement, interest, or involvement in the strategic planning process, especially when considering more total people outside the organization completed the survey than people within the organization.

As previously noted, only a small subset of Board Directors are actively involved on a regular basis in CCE's programmatic projects or governance committees, with much of the active workload being staff-led. While it is reasonable that volunteers fulfill different roles than staff, many of the accomplishments during CCE's 40-year history have been because of the substantive and organizational contributions of Board Directors. There is great value in this unique model, which, when effectively employed, allows CCE to have an outsized impact for a small organization. Therefore, we need to revisit the past iterations of Board engagement, evaluate what type of Board engagement is the best fit for our current organization today, and work to reignite active Board participation in vital areas.

The 2021 SP Committee, in some ways, suspects that CCE's large Board and EC have led to a diffusion of responsibility, in which each person assumes another person has responsibility for taking action or has already done so. This shows up in everything from the rate of response to surveys, to attendance at the twice-annual Board meetings, to participation in programmatic or governance committees, to individual giving during fundraising campaigns, and more. Examples include:

- In CCE's 2020 demographics survey, there were only 72 respondents. The full Board is typically upwards of 175 representatives, meaning that only around 41% responded.
- In CCE's 2021 Mid-Year Fundraising Campaign, while all but two members of the EC contributed (92%), only 54 of the full 182 Board Directors gave (29%), and half of those donors are EC Members.
- At CCE's June 2021 Board meeting, only 73 Board Directors attended.

As is detailed in Goal 1, Outcome 1 below, it is important to measure the current levels of Board engagement, but it is apparent that larger Board engagement is low in many categories.

The 2021 SP Committee also wants CCE to clarify its expectations of Board Directors and their level of individual involvement. CCE has never had a mandatory Board agreement or any particular requirements of Board service, making service flexible to each person's skills, interests, and capacity. But it does raise an important question of "what is the Board's role at CCE?" If Board Directors either pay dues or assist with dues payment from their law firms or businesses, is that sufficient? Or does CCE have needs that require that our Board Directors be further engaged, attending the twice-yearly Board meetings, making an individual contribution that is meaningful to them, actively participating on a programmatic or governance Committee?

CCE has also received feedback from Board Directors themselves that some feel as if they are uninvolved in the day-to-day activities of the organization and disconnected from the mission, staff, and fellow Board Directors.

The Committee deliberately cultivated a space for the open, transparent, and honest exchange of ideas amidst frequently challenging conversations, and this experience was highly valued by Committee members. It is an experience we would like to see replicated in CCE's other committee work and interactions between staff and Board, and which will hopefully spark a renewed spirit of engagement with all of CCE's leaders.

GOAL 1: Review what historically have been the roles of the Executive Committee, standing Committees, and full Board at CCE, and establish how those roles should possibly change as CCE enters its next chapter.

• **OUTCOMES:**

1. A clear understanding of what CCE's current levels of Board engagement are (i.e. attendance at Board meetings; Committee memberships; individual giving)
2. Clarification of what role we expect of the Board with regards to CCE's financial, sustainability, governance, and programmatic work beyond what is specified in the organizational Bylaws
3. Clearer expectations for Board membership as well as EC membership and standing Committee membership.
4. Clarity on who should be recruited to serve on the Board and in leadership positions, and how the recruiting process should be improved.
5. Clarified functions of Board-led programmatic and governance Committees and explicitly delineate the differing responsibilities of staff who support the Committees and Board Directors who serve on the Committees.
6. A formal Board agreement for all Board Directors, which is renewed annually.

- **MEASUREMENT:**

1. Have clear, documented expectations for Board Directors with regards to engagement in such areas as individual giving, Board meeting attendance and Committee engagement.
2. Develop a Board agreement that is updated annually (as needed), and reach an 80% signature rate goal with existing members.

- **STEPS:**

1. By the February 2022 EC meeting, the EC will determine whether an existing governance Committee will tackle Goal 1 or whether a new “Board Engagement” Committee should be engaged.
 - If an existing Committee will handle it, they will be informed and determine a timeline by their March or April 2022 Committee Meeting.
 - If a new Committee is created, a staff lead should be determined and prospective members should be identified and contacted by March 2022, and a first meeting scheduled for April or May 2022.
2. By April 1, 2022, the Development Manager will determine the current levels of Board engagement for existing members based on several measurements (e.g. individual giving; Committee memberships; attendance at board meetings, etc.) and, per Measurement 1 above, set metrics of Board engagement by June 2022.
3. By June 1, 2022, the “Board Engagement” or existing governance Committee will develop and share a timeline for their proposed work with the EC.
4. By the November 2022 EC meeting, the Board Engagement Committee will share their findings and proposed expectations for review and approval.
5. By the December 2022 Board meeting, the Board Engagement Committee will share their findings and proposed expectations for review and approval.
6. Starting January 1, 2023, a Board agreement will be shared with all existing and new Board Directors for signature.
7. In September and October 2023, the Membership Committee will review the existing Board agreement and make any necessary revisions; to be shared with the EC at November 2023 EC meeting and with the full Board at the December 2023 Board meeting.
8. Starting January 1, 2024, an updated Board agreement will be shared with all existing and new Board Directors for signature.
9. In September and Oct 2024, the Membership Committee will review the existing Board agreement and make any necessary revisions; to be shared with the EC at November 2024 EC meeting and with the full Board at the December 2024 Board meeting.

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff time, in particular, the Development Manager, ED and/or DD and whoever is chosen as the Committee staff lead, with additional staff input as needed, and Board time for planning and execution.
2. Board buy-in if CCE increases the requirements of Board engagement.

GOAL 2: Revise and communicate expectations of Board membership to all Directors and develop accountability measures to encourage participation.

- **OUTCOMES:**

1. All current (and new) Board Directors have a clear understanding of the expectations of their level of Board membership and what it entails.
2. A Board giving policy focused on 100% participation and increase personal contributions from Board Directors.
3. Re-engagement with existing but inactive/low activity Board Directors and increase their overall depth of Board participation or discuss transition to new members in line with diversification goals.
4. A process for handling non-engaged Board representatives.
5. A culture of engaged Board membership, whether that is programmatic, governance or financial.
6. Accessible options for directly impacted and other minoritized identities to be able to engage in the Board experience.

- **MEASUREMENTS:**

1. Based on Goal 1, Outcome 1 above, set increased but realistic metrics of Board engagement for annual evaluation in 2022, 2023 and 2024.
2. Set annual benchmarks for increasing Board giving (e.g. 100% EC; 50% Board by FY2022).
3. Set annual benchmarks for Board attendance at twice-annual meetings.
4. Set annual benchmarks for Board involvement on programmatic and governance Committees.
5. Have a clear, documented process in place for handling non-engaged Board representatives.

- **STEPS:**

1. By February 2022, the Development Manager will create and share a survey with Board Directors to create a list of volunteers to work on fundraising activities, such as, but not limited to, making calls to thank donors, making calls to other Board Directors about fundraising campaigns, soliciting sponsorships, hosting small events, and so on.

2. By March 2022, the Development Manager, with input from CCE staff and relevant governance Committees, will draft a fundraising and personal giving policy. Share with the Board by June 2022 Board meeting.
3. Following the development of Board expectations and a Board agreement (approved at the December 2022 Board meeting), in Q1 2023, CCE will host at least two meetings to review Board expectations with existing members to clarify expectations, answer questions, etc.
4. By March 2023, the ED, DD, and Board Leadership will determine ways to accommodate a larger variety of Board Directors needs in order to engage in CCE's work (such as disability accessibility; transportation options; childcare; etc.)
5. By March 2023, the Membership Committee will do additional follow-up with Board Directors as needed to obtain signed Board agreements.
6. Once expectations for Board membership are in place, the membership Committee will develop a documented process for handling non-engaged Board representatives. This should include:
 - a. A process of follow-up with At-Risk Board Directors for outreach
 - b. A system of Board-to-Board outreach
 - c. A plan for handling Board Directors who don't sign the agreement
 - d. A procedure for formally removing non-engaged Board Directors

- **RESOURCES:**

1. Staff and Board time for planning and execution, particularly the Development Manager and Membership Committee.
2. Board buy-in for the Board giving policy.