

TREE FUND STRATEGIC PLAN: 2018 TO 2020

ACQUIRE RESOURCES (LEAD: DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE)

- Complete the endowment building campaign per the following schedule, while securing sufficient unrestricted funds to fully cover annual operations:
 - *End of 2018: \$4.75M in endowment, plus additional \$250K pledged*
 - *End of 2019: \$5.50M in endowment, plus additional \$500K pledged*
 - *End of 2020: \$6.25M in endowment, plus additional \$750K pledged*
- Identify new sources of donation support from outside the green industry (*List of new prospects to Development Committee annually in October*)
- Identify and implement community engagement events with strong return on investment, both financially and organizationally (*Conduct in-depth review of Tour des Trees after 2018 Ohio event before announcing 2019; establish annual calendar of events each October as part of budget process*)
- Revitalize planned giving program (*Formally re-launch Heritage Oak Society by July 2019*)
- Increase use of digital marketing aimed at potential donors (*Engage digital marketing firm by March 2018 in conjunction with Communications Committee; launch new website by end of 2018*)

ALLOCATE RESOURCES (LEAD: RESEARCH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE)

- Ensure that grant and scholarship application documents are clear, distinct, and precise and in line with TREE Fund goals and research priorities (*Review all RFPs for upcoming year annually in September; also set application calendar for upcoming year at same time*)
- Review and revise, if necessary, the mechanisms, criteria, and weightings used to score grants for research, education, and scholarships to ensure efficiency and effectiveness for selection of the recipients that best fit the goals of each program (*Review application structure annually in September, along with work documented in prior bullet*)
- Evaluate grant applications and make recommendations to the board as required by our Declaration of Trust (*Twice annually in May and December*)
- As appropriate, update the educational and research goals of TREE Fund to ensure that we meet current needs (*Review Education Benchmark Grant Report by June 2018, Research Impacts Grant Report by December 2018, and establish new/revised priorities by August 2019 to support RFP and rating/screening reviews above*)

COMMUNICATE OPPORTUNITIES AND OUTCOMES (LEAD: COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE)

- Continue to establish TREE Fund as the premier funding source for its research priorities (*Review final grant-making levels in February annually for alignment with development and research goals, and prepare annual public report by March annually*)
- Strengthen the brand of TREE Fund through (a) widespread reporting of research outcomes, and (b) building stronger relations with sister organizations (*Engage digital marketing firm by March 2018; re-brand agency newsletter by March 2018; create new website by end of 2018; conduct annual review of current and new partnerships in October annually in conjunction with Development Committee*)

- Target desired audience groups and use various media to inform and educate them about TREE Fund activities (*Develop annual media calendar by January 2018 and review monthly*)
- Develop improved strategies for disseminating research outcomes (*Conduct reviews in June and January annually after grant awards, and actively disseminate research outcomes through all outlets*)

OVERSEE MANAGEMENT (LEAD: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

- Annually review and update, when necessary, CEO job description to incorporate changes and opportunities in our industry (*CEO evaluate job description annually in July and make recommendations to Executive Committee*)
- Oversee the CEO as described in new Trustee Policy 2017-02 “Governance and Management” (*Monthly conversations with CEO as part of Executive Committee meetings*)
- Frequently evaluate job performance of the CEO, and make contract and remuneration recommendations as appropriate (*CEO provide self-assessment annually in July; Executive Committee conduct performance evaluation annually in August, with recommendation for changes in compensation, if any, to Board annually at September/October conference call*)
- Measure organizational effectiveness by (a) monitoring CEO reports, (b) conducting self-assessment surveys and (c) examining external surveys of clients, patrons and new potential donors (*Evaluate CEO reports to Board in advance of May and December board meetings annually; conduct board and staff “360 review” annually in August; conduct customer satisfaction review annually in December*)
- Conduct a compensation survey to ensure CEO and staff salaries are equitable and in line with industry standards (*Complete compensation survey by June 2019 to support 2020 budget*)
- Annually evaluate Strategic Plan to review prior year’s activities and add subsequent year’s strategies and goals (*Re-convene Strategic Planning Task Force annually in February to prepare update plan for Trustee approval in May*)

REGULATE GOVERNANCE (LEAD: GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE)

- Periodically review governance documents, policies and procedures for clarity, consistency and relevance (*Roll out new Trustee Handbook in January 2018; review annually in January*)
Annually review governance activities of Standing Committees to ensure compliance with committee charters (*Review all Committee reports annually in December against Committee Charters contained in new Trustee Handbook*)
- Develop a Board Composition Matrix that seeks to balance professional, geographic, and diversity goals to focus recruitment efforts (*Complete matrix by October 2018*)
- Formally document the process for recruitment and selection of board members as well as mentoring and succession programs for the board (*Review Trustee Handbook sections on Board recruitment in January 2019 to ensure compliance with new matrix, etc.*)
- Develop mechanism to ensure that TREE Fund continually performs its due diligence both ethically and financially (*Complete policy statement on step to conduct such due diligence by September 2018; integrate into Trustee Handbook in January 2019*)

SUPERINTEND FINANCES (LEAD: FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEES)

- Maintain TREE Fund as a financially sound 501(c)3 non-profit organization that operates in a cost-effective and responsible manner (*Review CEO reports monthly; review CEO-prepared budget in October and submit to Trustees for approval in December annually*)
- Make financial recommendations to the board including, (a) investment options and their performance, (b) annual updates of a five year plan, and (c) fundraising for endowment pools (*Evaluate CCT Growth Pool annually after their fiscal year closes in November, and present findings to Trustees; prepare a high-level five year financial plan annually beginning with 2018 budget; conduct thorough evaluation of endowment pools in March 2019 to ensure final year of endowment building campaign addresses any shortfalls or needed consolidations*)
- Oversee the development, review and approval of the annual budget (*CEO submit budget annually in October; present to Trustees for approval annually in December*)
- Arrange for annual audit and supply all requisite documents for the audit (*Complete audit engagement annually in November; ensure audit is complete annually in April to support on-time tax filings; present audit results to Trustees annually in May*)
- Maintain financial solvency by (a) maintaining appropriate cash reserve, (b) limit exposure to financial risk, and (c) allocating sufficient resources to support management's daily operations (*Evaluate and document a cash reserve policy in October 2018 as part of 2019 budget; review all insurance policies annually in June; ensure operating budget results in positive net unrestricted income annually in October*)

SATISFY CLIENTS AND PATRONS (LEAD: LIAISON COMMITTEE)

- Engage and retain clients, patrons, and friends in the following ways: (a) quantify TREE Fund's outputs, outcomes and contributions to the tree-care industry and urban forest health, safety and resilience, and (b) along with the Research/Education and Communications Committees, gather, track and disseminate grant outcomes and impact (*Release annual findings documented in Research/Education and Communication Committees sections above to Chapters via Liaisons annually in December*)
- Ensure that donors understand the impact of their contributions (*CEO provide signage and related materials to all Chapters via liaisons annually in January to support conferences, etc.*)
- Provide public recognition and appreciation of clients and donors (*Work with Development and Communications Committees to prepare and disseminate a formal annual report of gifts and impacts by May each year, after Audit approval*)
- Promote "friend-raising" by sharing TREE Fund successes, outcomes and impacts (*Ensure TREE Fund representation at all ISA, TCIA and related conferences, with focus on outcomes and impacts, not retail fundraising; CEO develop annual calendar with Liaisons in January annually*)
- Develop mechanisms that open the circle to new groups of prospective donors, supporters and partners (*Work with Development Committee on list of prospects annually in October*)