

Strategic Plan for Impact100 DC

2024-2027

At Impact100 DC, our vision is to address unmet needs in our community, prioritizing those that result from systemic racism and structural inequity. We aim to create and sustain a diverse community of dynamic women committed to building bridges across the wide demographic divides in the Washington, DC area and to empower women as philanthropists and leaders. Since our beginning in 2020, we have awarded over \$500,000 in high impact grants to fifteen nonprofit organizations on the front lines of change in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Impact100 DC partnered with Spur Local to create a three year strategic plan as we aim to grow and make a greater impact in our region. We are excited to share the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, which outlines our ongoing investment in local progress and change. The following five goals are designed to enhance the impact of Impact100 DC throughout the DC region. From continuing our growth pattern to diversifying our membership and ensuring our sustainability, these goals serve our values and our primary mission: to make a positive, local difference through collective giving and engagement. We invite you to join us in the coming years to build community, support local nonprofits, and make a lasting impact.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Impact100 DC partnered with Spur Local to create a three year strategic plan, spanning from Fall 2024 through December of 2027. (Please note that while the plan was officially approved at the end of 2024, Impact100 DC began working on immediate objectives beginning in late summer, 2024.) The planning process incorporated valuable feedback from past nonprofit grantees, our leadership, and our members. Through surveys, interviews, and focus groups, we listened to our core constituents, understanding their passion for our work and their desire to support more nonprofits in the greater Washington, DC community.

Our plan focuses on five strategic goals, all aimed at increasing our community impact, ensuring sustainability, and upholding our values, particularly our commitment to equity. We aim to grow our membership to increase our community contributions. We will explore new ways to share our story and brand within the community to attract more women to join and inform more nonprofits about the support they can receive. Recognizing the

importance of volunteer leadership, we are committed to a successful leadership transition, to developing a more robust leadership pipeline, and to reviewing our leadership structure to ensure long-term sustainability.

At the core of this plan, and our broader work, is Impact100 DC's dedication to local nonprofits. We will continue to review and refine our application and selection process to make it as effective as possible for both our nonprofit applicants and our focus area committee volunteers.

Finally, we will continue to build our internal financial capacity to make unique community investments, grow our membership, and support greater diversity among our members. Impact100 DC is excited to pursue these five strategic goals in the coming years.

Goal One: Grow and Diversify our Membership to Support More Local Nonprofits

Impact100 DC is committed to expanding our membership to better support local nonprofits as every membership dollar goes directly to supporting our annual grants. Our strategic plan includes a focused effort on recruitment, retention, and further diversifying the organization.

Growth. Our goal over the next three years is to achieve a meaningful increase in our membership, which totaled 164 in 2024, thereby raising more funding annually for local nonprofits.

To achieve this growth, we will implement and expand upon several key initiatives. First, we will add additional emphasis to our annual peer-to-peer membership drive that engages all current members in recruitment efforts. Additionally, we will identify and collaborate with additional community partners such as businesses and associations who can help share and even sponsor membership opportunities within their networks. We will undergo outreach to women and minority-led organizations and businesses with an eye to coming before them to speak about Impact100 DC.

Retention. Member satisfaction is obviously key to member retention. The Strategic Planning process included our first all-member survey regarding member satisfaction and alignment with Impact100 DC's mission and vision. While our initial survey questions were relatively general in nature, respondents reported a 74% overall satisfaction rate with the organization and a 94% alignment on mission. While these numbers show the organization is strong, we understand there is room for improvement. Moving forward, we will utilize an annual member survey with a variety of questions to gauge member satisfaction on a variety of fronts. This will allow us to stay abreast of member insights and identify areas for

improvement. We aim to reach at least a 90% member satisfaction rate by the end of 2027 based on these efforts.

We will also continue to closely monitor our annual retention rates. In the fall of 2024, we conducted our first lapsed member campaign to reach out to former members and invite them back. Going forward, we expect that surveys will allow us to determine the various reasons why members may have left the organization.

Finally, feedback from the all-member survey in 2024 indicated that members want us to continue to offer educational events about key issues in philanthropy, as well as purely social events, to encourage participation of members who do not participate in grant review work. Through all of these efforts, we aim to improve the annual retention rate of members by the end of the strategic plan period.

Diverse Membership. We are committed to increasing racial and ethnic diversity as well as expanding diversity with regard to geography, age, and economic capacity. A cohesive community that bridges numerous demographic divides is central to our mission and to our success as an effective grantmaking organization.

Our aim is for a meaningful increase by the end of the strategic plan period in: (1) the share of our membership who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color; (2) the share of our members under the age of 45; and (3) the share of members coming from Virginia, Prince George's County, and the farther-out areas of Montgomery County.

Our first step will be to solicit member profile information of all new and renewing members, explaining to them that this basic demographic information is important for measuring our strategic progress.

We need to consider expanding membership options beyond current opportunities offered through our fellowship program and shared memberships. Options include expansion of our existing fellowship program, better marketing of shared memberships, the creation of another membership tier, and creation of a funding goal to support membership fees. In 2024, we have four sharing members and eight fellows. We aim to achieve a meaningful increase by the end of the strategic plan period in the number of members who participate at a reduced cost. Our first step will be to conduct research among other Impact100 chapters to learn which options work well for them.

As we work to expand our recruitment efforts beyond member-to-member recruitment we will target women-led organizations, particularly those that will help us expand a diverse membership, and ask all members to tap into their existing, larger networks to recruit.

By pursuing these objectives, Impact100 DC aims to strengthen our community impact and foster a more inclusive and diverse membership, in order to enhance our support for local nonprofits.

Goal Two: Increase Awareness of Impact100 DC with Potential Grantees and Members

Impact100 DC aims to enhance and define its local brand to raise awareness among potential members and grantees alike. While we are proud to be a part of a global network of Impact100 chapters that have contributed over \$140 million to local communities across the country over the past 23 years, our work will center on what makes the Impact100 DC chapter unique.

Understanding as we do that the nonprofit community on the frontlines of social change are the experts, we will strive to build genuine partnerships with nonprofits to elevate our understanding of community challenges and solutions, and provide meaningful opportunities for them to engage with us in and outside of the grants process. We are committed to building deeper relationships with grantees and applicants to highlight their stories and work – on our website, in our monthly newsletter, and on social media — so that our members get to know them more fully. Highlighting the work of our grantees helps us underscore the impact of member contributions. Another goal is to identify leaders from area nonprofits who would like to join our leadership track (Board and/or key committee chair roles) to have a direct voice in our decision making processes. Our efforts to refine our grantmaking process (Goal #4) will dovetail with this work. Over the next three years, we are committed to identifying and eliminating barriers that may keep small, grassroots-based organizations from applying for our grants.

With regard to members, starting in 2024 we endeavored to double down on our member-to-member recruitment efforts by expanding our outreach toolkit and developing a social media campaign. Messaging will underscore not just the profound impact of our grants but also how personally rewarding it is to be a member of Impact100 DC. Training will be provided to members on the updated marketing strategy, along with templates and tools for individual promotion. In addition, we will connect with local women’s civic, professional, and philanthropic organizations to spread awareness of our impact as well as our membership opportunities.

We will also build awareness through outreach to local media. We will seek out opportunities to network with local media personalities who can raise awareness of our brand and mission, as we did recently in an event with the publisher of The Washingtonian. We will explore opportunities provided by cable television as well, building on an existing relationship with a program that highlights the work of local nonprofits.

Goal Three: Design and Implement a Successful and Sustainable Leadership Succession

Impact100 DC is committed to ensuring a smooth and sustainable leadership transition to maintain the organization's momentum and stability as we move from a start-up to an established organization. This goal involves designing a detailed succession plan for current leadership and establishing a continuous leadership pipeline for future transitions.

Work on this objective has already begun. In the fall of 2024, we created a formal Governance and Nominations Committee of the Board whose first task was to identify, vet, and recommend to the Board a new treasurer. The Committee will create and implement a leadership pipeline plan and review our board structure to ensure it aligns with our long-term goals. It will serve as the nominating body for vacant board and senior leadership positions, initially focusing on the transition of the founding Impact100 DC President and Vice President. In Year One, the Committee will develop comprehensive job descriptions and other materials, including manuals to facilitate future transitions. Clear and transparent communication with our membership regarding decisions made during the transition will be prioritized.

We will measure success by tracking the average retention of board members and senior leadership roles and monitoring the percentage of members who report considering board service in our annual survey. Furthermore, we will assess the board retention rate in the year following the transition.

As with all of our work to date, this succession planning effort will emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Goal Four: Refine the Grantmaking Process

The Impact100 DC grants leadership team routinely reviews and revises its processes each year based on experience and feedback from the previous one in an effort to be responsive to the concerns and suggestions of our members and the nonprofit community. This year, as a result of Spur Local's interviews with members and focus group work, we drilled down to learn more about what parts of the grant review process focus area committee members would like to modify.

While most Focus Area Committee (FAC) members have a positive view of the process, there are concerns that some FAC's have far more applications than others, making the work more difficult to accomplish in the allotted amount of time. To date, we have employed the five focus areas utilized by the national Impact100 brand: Arts & Culture; Education; Environment; Health & Wellness; and Family. We receive far fewer applications in two focus areas – Arts & Culture and Environment – and in 2023 were not able to run the Environment FAC due to a lack of applicants. Moving forward, we will examine the language of our funding categories, the categories themselves, and the way applications are

assigned to specific committees. We will conduct research among other Impact100 chapters and review ideas from constituent interviews and surveys to identify options for restructuring. To respond to the voices of our members, we may create new focus area categories or even do away with focus areas altogether. We will also review proposals to revise the grants calendar. We will pilot at least two new actions to respond to member concerns during the strategic planning period based on findings from research and review. We will increase transparency within the membership and FAC volunteers regarding the volume of applications and their categorization.

We will measure the success of those new actions through FAC member surveys and the retention rate of FAC members. The other issue that we will address to enhance our commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion is finding ways to make it easier for smaller, grassroots-based organizations – especially organizations that lack the funds for professional grant writers – to apply for and succeed in receiving a grant. These are the organizations led by community members who best understand their needs and resources, and these are often the initiatives that give agency to those who have been unfairly marginalized, thus advancing our core principles of diversity, equity and inclusion.

We believe that allowing organizations that operate under a Fiscal Sponsor is one way to open our process to small, grassroots-based organizations, and will dedicate research to this option in Year One of our Strategic Plan. We will also look at what other Impact100 chapters are doing in this regard, review recommendations from our grantee interviews, and look for more ways for applicants to share their ideas on this topic with us. Finally, we will work to actively listen to the voices of the nonprofit sector as amplified by social media and elsewhere that explore elements of trust-based philanthropy. By the end of our Strategic Planning period, we aim for an increase in the number of nonprofit applicants who are small, grassroots-based organizations.

Goal Five: Increase Sustainability by Growing Impact100 DC's Financial Capacity

Impact100 DC will enhance its internal financial capacity to support organizational investments, capacity building, and the pursuit of its strategic goals. By the end of the strategic planning period we aim to have increased annual revenue by at least 40% as well as to be maintaining organization reserve funds of \$20,000. Our current yearly expenses are approximately \$18,000 and we have approximately \$9,000 in reserves. Reserves are largely funded by members (including all Board members) who donate a minimum of \$100 in addition to their annual membership dues – the “member-plus” contributors.

To achieve this goal, we will need to increase member-plus contributions well beyond the current level of 50 or 60%. Options include making the additional 10% mandatory and

cultivating and expanding the number of members who give generously beyond the “plus” level. We will better celebrate current member donors who give beyond that 10% and share the annual budget with our membership so that they have a fuller understanding of our operations and appreciate the need to generate more revenue for operations

In addition, we will identify and pursue 4-5 potential corporate or foundation funders to contribute to capacity building or operating funds. The first step in this process is identifying a person to do this work.

Success will be measured by the growth of our reserve funds, and a larger budget due to members’ additional gifts. This financial growth will support a diverse membership and ensure long-term sustainability to support our local nonprofit community.

CONCLUSION

Impact100 DC began in 2019 when several like-minded women gathered to create an organization that would allow us to learn more about our local nonprofit community, prioritize equity, and foster change through high-impact grants of \$100,000. When we began, we knew that partnerships and bridge building would be key paths to success. That conviction has been reinforced many times over. Our strategic plan is much stronger given the community wisdom and experience of Spur Local and we are proud to call them partners. The community relationships we have formed, with the DC Library Foundation, for example, and with our donors, have the power to strengthen each organization. With each grant we give, we enter into a partnership with a remarkable organization that is making a significant and positive impact within our beloved community. And finally, with each new member we in effect become a new and different organization. There is true strength in this wonderful community of women that is Impact100 DC. We are excited to move forward with a strategic plan that will enable us to grow and become even stronger.