



MISSION

STONE SOUP EMPOWERS PEOPLE EXPERIENCING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT TO ACHIEVE SELF RELIANCE THROUGH TRAINING FOR CAREERS IN THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

VISION

A COMMITTED AND THRIVING WORKFORCE DEVELOPED THROUGH FOOD AND SERVICE

VALUES

EMPOWERMENT, TRUST, COLLABORATION, EQUITY & INCLUSION, ACCOUNTABILITY

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS 2021-23

#1

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF GRADUATES

#2

PREPARE AND SUPPORT OUR GRADUATES FOR JOBS WITH POSITIVE LONG-TERM OUTCOMES FOR THEMSELVES AND EMPLOYERS

#3

BE A DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION THAT MAKES OUR COMMUNITY MORE JUST AND EQUITABLE

#4

ENSURE THE FINANCIAL STABILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION

#5

SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Increase graduates to 40 in 2022 and 65 in 2023

- 80% of graduates employed within 30 days of graduation
- 80% of employed graduates still employed 1 year after graduation

- Increase relationships with culturally diverse partners
- Cross training & mentorship to increase promotions
- Increase participant stipend by 25%

- 60%+ of revenue from business operations
- Balanced budget that meets growth plans

- Measure employee satisfaction
- Above average employee retention & compensation



Strategic Plan 2021-23

INTRODUCTION

Stone Soup has developed this strategic plan to guide our third chapter since opening in July 2019. In our first chapter we began building a team, opened a restaurant, established community partnerships, started a training program, and obtained funding to support those activities. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, we pivoted to providing meals for residents of 11 emergency shelters and tiny-home villages, preparing over 95,000 meals and coordinating foodservice partners to provide an additional 242,000 meals during the pandemic, while strengthening our financial position.

Now we are entering our third chapter. As the pandemic gradually winds down and life starts to return to normal, homelessness is at record levels, we are increasingly aware of the need to fight inequality and racism, the foodservice industry is changing, and our financial model is still in flux. This plan – the product of work by our board, staff, participants, and community partners – is our strategic assessment of our challenges and opportunities and how to best approach them.

This document will be used to guide annual budgets and operational plans. The board will review it at least once annually to assess progress and consider updates.

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission: Stone Soup empowers people experiencing barriers to employment to achieve self-reliance through training for careers in the foodservice industry.

Vision: A committed and thriving workforce developed through food and service.

Values:

Empowerment: Promote a positive, constructive, and inclusive work environment, creating a culture that empowers the well being of our staff, participants, and community.

Trust: Trust ourselves and those around us to act with the best of intentions.

Collaboration: Create and maintain mutually beneficial partnerships with like-minded organizations for the betterment of Stone Soup and the community.

Equity & Inclusion: Actively commit to fairness, racial justice, and building a place of belonging where every member of the Stone Soup community has an equal voice and opportunity to learn.

Accountability: Hold ourselves accountable to long-term financial management and environmental stewardship, as well as be responsible to each other, to our community, and to ourselves.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND INITIATIVES

Stone Soup has established five major strategic goals for 2021-2023:

- 1) Increase the number of graduates.
- 2) Prepare and support our graduates for jobs with positive long-term outcomes for themselves and employers.
- 3) Be a diverse, inclusive organization that makes our community more just and equitable.
- 4) Ensure the financial stability of the organization.
- 5) Support our people.

Following is more information about each goal and the initiatives we plan to pursue to achieve each goal.

Goal 1: Increase the number of graduates.

Goal rationale: Acknowledging the positive impact that we have on participants, regardless of whether they graduate, and on our community through serving nutritious meals to those in need and community building, our single most important outcome is graduating participants from our training program. As we focus on this outcome, we will continue admitting participants who can benefit the most from our services, rather than just focusing on graduate numbers.

Challenges: In 2019, we experienced difficulty getting enough participants from our referral partners and retaining participants in the program, especially in their first weeks. These challenges were magnified by the pandemic in 2020, which significantly disrupted our training program.

Initiatives:

- a) Continue to refine the training program based on participant input to improve retention.
- b) Strengthen partnerships with external service providers to ensure participants are supported throughout the program.

- c) Start recruiting self-referred participants to increase cohort sizes.
- d) Quadruple the number of participants by doubling cohort sizes by early 2022, and doubling program cycles per year by 2023.
- e) Invest in the upstairs kitchen to improve capacity and functionality and basement to improve functionality and comfort.

What we won't do: Where practical, we will provide support services to participants through external providers rather than in-house resources. We are not contemplating major changes in the structure of our training program.

Key performance indicators: Increase the number of graduates to 40 in 2022 and 65 in 2023.

Goal 2: Prepare and support our graduates for jobs with positive long-term outcomes for themselves and employers.

Goal rationale: Maximising the positive impact that we have on our graduates' economic circumstances as well as our community requires us to not only help participants graduate from the program, but also find work that is a good fit for both them and their future employer.

Challenges: Roughly one third of our graduates do not go on to secure work after completing our program. For those who do secure work in foodservice, the high stress and fast paced environment can be especially challenging for people who are recovering from trauma, which can lead to employees resigning and/or not meeting employers' expectations.

Initiatives:

- a) Invest more heavily in our employer-graduate relationships, particularly after graduates get a job, to help resolve issues that arise.
- b) Improve graduate engagement with Stone Soup, potentially with financial incentives, and develop an active alumni network to mentor and help current participants.
- c) Develop a retail soup business that provides additional training opportunities for participants while also improving the financial stability of our organization (goal 4).
- d) Develop a trauma informed curriculum in collaboration with other Catalyst Kitchen members to help selected hiring partners provide a better workplace environment.

- e) Consider incorporating an additional ~2 week externship to our current program, focusing on placements that are likely to lead to permanent jobs.

We are actively working on (a), (b), and (c). We will begin exploring (d) in 2021-22 and (e) in 2022.

The retail soup initiative and other businesses listed under goal 4 will also contribute toward goal 2.

What we won't do: We will not develop a front-of-house training program.

Key performance indicators:

- 80% of graduates will be employed within 30 days of graduation.
- 80% of graduates who found jobs will still be employed 1 year after graduation.
- 50% of graduates will either attend an alumni event or reconnect with Stone Soup within 1 year of graduation.

Goal 3: Be a diverse, inclusive organization that makes our community more just and equitable.

Goal rationale: Stone Soup prides itself on being a welcoming place to people of all backgrounds. To truly be an anti-racist organization, we can't only make our own space welcoming, but also need to fight against injustice when we see it. We realize that true inclusion takes work on behalf of leadership and staff. Thus we treat Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) with the reverence and respect of one of our top strategic priorities.

Challenges: We serve a diverse community. Recognizing this and acknowledging all that it entails is the first critical step. Both our program participants and full-time staff represent the BIPOC and LGBTQI+ communities and include individuals who have experienced homelessness. As well, Stone Soup is intentional about who we recruit as trainees in an effort to reach people who have been systematically marginalized. Making sure each of these voices have a seat at the table and opinions are considered equally is both a challenge and an opportunity.

Subgoals:

1. Create space to fight injustices within our community. (Justice)
2. Ensure our staff and participants are feeling valued. (Equity)
3. Hire and recruit a diverse and multiculturally sensitive staff and board of directors. (Diversity)

4. Promote transparency by showing the respect to share all information where possible. (Inclusion)
5. Promote fairness by listening to, and taking into consideration all points of view. (Inclusion)
6. Be curious and hungry to learn; educate ourselves on JEDI work. (JEDI)

Initiatives:

1. Pay a higher stipend to participants.
2. Continue to build relationships with BIPOC run organizations and other diverse partners to recruit for job positions within Stone Soup.
3. Promote from within.
4. Cross training on various positions within the organization.
5. Create Mentorships for staff & participants, to increase skills and relationship development.

Key performance indicators: (To be defined by end of 2021)

- Post All Stone Soup job opportunities and board positions to partner organizations that are majority BIPOC and/or multiculturally run
- Increase participant stipend by 25%
- Offer all open positions to internal candidates first, with a goal of filling 75%+ of open positions from internal candidates
- Offer training opportunities to 75%+ of our employees in positions outside of their core role
- Establish mentor relationships with 30%+ of our staff

Goal 4: Ensure the financial stability of the organization.

Goal rationale: Stone Soup's long-term financial sustainability is critical, particularly as a younger less-established organization, if it is to continue delivering on its mission and grow its impact.

Challenges: Prior to the pandemic, Stone Soup found it difficult to create a sustainable funding model from: (a) our primary business, the restaurant, which was struggling to develop a steady customer base; (b) individual, corporate and foundation donors, with whom we had yet to establish enough strong relationships, and (c) government grants, due to lack of time and the organization's immaturity. During the pandemic, Stone Soup has been able to develop a sustainable funding model through contract meals for shelters, but these opportunities may not last and the pre-pandemic challenges remain.

Initiatives:

- a) Continue focusing on contract meals for shelters and residential facilities and explore expanding into contract meals for schools. As our core business, this will also provide significant training opportunities (supporting goal 2).
- b) Launch a retail soup business by early 2022 to generate revenue, strengthen our community presence and provide additional training opportunities (supporting goal 2).
- c) Increase funding from grants and donors by hiring a development person to focus on grant applications and community/donor relations. Starting in 2022, that person or another person may also help with marketing for Stone Soup overall, catering, and special events.
- d) Explore other opportunities in 2022-23 including catering or opening a food stall / cart, subject to organizational capacity and space constraints.
- e) Keep our lunch counter closed for 2022 due to better use of space / organizational resources, challenging restaurant environment, and reduction in neighborhood foot traffic. Reassess the prospects for the restaurant by the end of 2022.
- f) Reassess our space requirements in 2023, in preparation for our lease end date in February 2024, to ensure it is optimal for our training and business operation needs.

What we won't do: Reopen the lunch counter in 2022.

Key performance indicators:

- Raise at least 60% of our revenue through business operations in 2023 and beyond.
- Be at least break even overall each year and develop a balanced budget at the end of each year that meets growth plans for the following year along with reserve needs.
- Create a financial reserve policy by the end of 2021 and ensure organisational alignment with the policy by end of 2022

Goal 5: Support our people.

Goal rationale: The ultimate strength of our organization is our people – our paid staff, participants and volunteers. We want our people to know they are valued and supported in their work and lives.

Challenges: As a new, rapidly growing organization that has had to pivot in response to the pandemic, we are still improving how we can best support our people in a high-stress and physically and emotionally demanding job, while continuing to cultivate a culture that deeply embeds our organization's values. As a non-profit that is still developing a sustainable funding model, we also need to balance our desire to compensate our people fairly while remaining within our financial limitations.

Initiatives:

- a) Aim to be a best-in-class employer – in terms of compensation and benefits, organizational culture, physical environment, and training and development – for non-profits in the Portland area by:
 - i) Providing regular pay increases for employees meeting their job descriptions, trying to keep employees at or above industry norms for Portland
 - ii) Providing health insurance at low cost for all full-time employees and at cost for their families
 - iii) Continuing to offer 4-day work weeks and encouraging staff to take vacation consistent with our organizational needs
 - iv) Holding staff retreats at least annually as well as regular social events
 - v) Providing regular training opportunities for all staff related to our work and personal development
- b) Make our people – paid employees, participants, and volunteers – a central factor in our strategic decision making.
- c) Integrate our JEDI goal initiatives with our People goal initiatives given the high degree of overlap between the two.

Key performance indicators:

- By the end of 2021, measure employee satisfaction annually through an organization-wide survey. Goals for employee satisfaction will be set for future years after establishing our baseline performance for 2021.
- Achieve better-than-average employee retention (specific metric and benchmark TBD by end of 2021).
- Achieve better-than-average employee compensation (specific metric and benchmark TBD by end of 2021).
- Engage each board member to interact with most staff members in some way each year

APPENDIX 1: ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

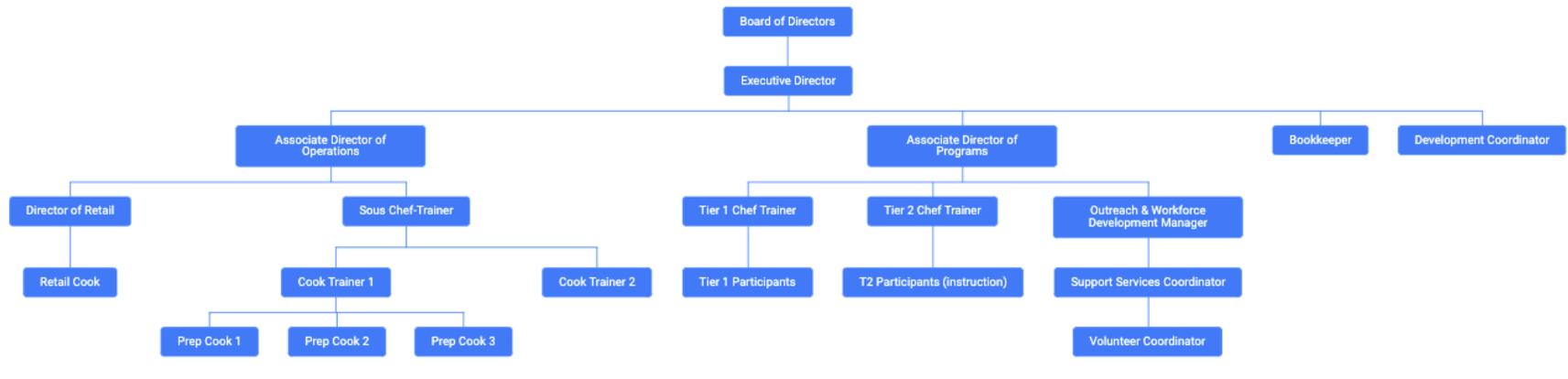
Following are our current organizational chart and the tentative chart for 2023. This is subject to change as our plans evolve.

Fall 2021 Organizational Chart



The current organisational structure focuses heavily on the food production Stone Soup is providing to our shelters. While this is necessary to continue our current revenue streams, the goals and initiatives laid out in this strategic plan necessitate a stronger focus on the **Program** side of Stone Soup.

2023 Organizational Chart



The 2023 organizational chart moves towards more staff support for program participants by developing an Associate Director of Programs who oversees the Chef Trainers and the Outreach & Workforce Development Manager. By having staff focus solely on the success of our participants, we hope to further emphasize the value each program participant feels they are getting from the program.

APPENDIX 2: METHODOLOGY

This plan was developed between May and October 2021 by a committee of [Stone Soup PDX](#) board and staff members, with input from participants, partners, employers, other community members, peer organizations elsewhere in the US, and Catalyst Kitchens. Potential strategic initiatives were assessed based on their impact toward strategic goals, community connection, alignment with Stone Soup's strengths, contribution to financial sustainability, initial and ongoing cost, effort and complexity, risk, and other factors. The resulting document is our current plan, subject to continuous evolution as we learn more and the environment changes.