

Development, Membership & Marketing

2024-25 Development, Membership & Marketing Plan

Goal: Sustain a thriving Wild Center by growing awareness of our work, driving visitation, and generating earned and unearned income through strategic targeted development, membership and marketing.

Strategy 1: Use designed-for-purpose targeted communications and marketing to expand, diversify and solidify TWC's supporting constituent groups: visitors, members, donors, volunteers and board members.

Objective 1: Broaden **awareness of TWC** and its mission and **increase on-site attendance to 102,000 visitors** by reaching desired audiences through targeted Marketing and Communications tactics.

- Tactic 1:** Use Traditional Marketing tactics to promote new and repeat visitation
 - Print Ads
 - Print Collateral (brochures, posters, etc.)
 - Radio Ads
 - Activation at off-site events and trade shows
 - Admission Partnerships
- Tactic 2:** Utilize Digital Marketing to reach specific groups of people with customized messaging
 - Organic and Paid Social Media Campaigns
 - Content Marketing
 - Behavioral and Contextual Display Ads
 - Pre-roll video
 - Google AdWords
 - Email Marketing
 - Website Content and Development
- Tactic 3:** Continue to build travel trade business and cement ties with I LOVE NY
 - GoNorthNewYork Reboot
 - Attendance at international and domestic travel shows
 - NYSTIA - Travel Champion Program

Objective 2: Enhance public perception of and community engagement with The Wild Center's current work through public relations and other strategic communications.

- Tactic 1:** Work with public relations partners to gain placements in strategic publications
 - Media Alerts & Press Releases
 - FAM Tours
 - Influencer Visits
- Tactic 2:** Enhance image and brand awareness through promotion of noteworthy programs, projects and strategic partnerships.
 - Work with YCP and education program staff to highlight high-profile partnerships or collaborations
 - Ex: Frontenac Arch Biosphere, Smithsonian Affiliate, AmeriCorps, NPS
 - Amplify the role TWC plays in the community with story placement of accomplishments and accolades.

Strategy 2: Identify, cultivate, solicit and steward a broad base of supporters to increase fundraising revenue for operating, special projects, capital needs and endowment.

Objective 1: Clearly communicate TWC's financial needs in terms of their mission driven-outcomes.

- Tactic 1:** Manage a **philanthropic messaging framework** that enables a consistent, disciplined approach to conveying strategically important messages through a range of channels and vehicles.

Objective 2: Transition visitors into members and promote a year-long experience with an expectation of visiting regularly and supporting a mission and organization they care about.

- Tactic 1:** Membership Program - in 2024 generate \$325,000 in Membership revenue, a 5% increase over 2023 actual
- Tactic 2:** Business Partnership - engage and retain over 25 Business Partners with quarterly workshops

Objective 3: Utilize relationship fundraising approach and segmented development appeals to broaden contributed income from individuals.

- Tactic 1:** Annual Fund Appeal - a series of personalized appeals to raise \$2,005,300 in general operating support
 - Individual: \$924,700
 - Unrestricted Grants: \$825,400
 - Annual Youth Climate Program (Grants & Contributions): \$255,200
- Tactic 2:** Major Gift Program & Take Five: plan special moves management for list of individuals to raise major gift support for annual and specific gifts
 - Director's Circle - host a dinner for Stephanie's portfolio of donors on August 20, 2024
- Tactic 3:** Linda Vaughan Society - encourage planned giving with annual event on July 30, 2024 and with LVS feature in Otter newsletter

Objective 4: Demonstrate role of TWC as an anchor attraction in the local economy by developing, nurturing and maintaining good relationships with the business community.

- Tactic 1:** Grow The Forest Business Partnership Program
- Tactic 2:** Eclipse Kick Off Event: Community Partnership Event
- Tactic 3:** Relaunch sponsorships, small business and corporate giving initiatives
- Tactic 4:** Update Economic Impact Study

Objective 5: Support the Committee on Trustees in the identification and stewardship of Board Prospects.

- Tactic 1:** Maintain Board Prospect List
- Tactic 2:** Coordinate COT board prospect research between Development Committee/Team
- Tactic 3:** Utilize Take Five stewardship to get to identify possible board prospects
- Tactic 4:** Board specific event - Trustee Takeover Family Night- August 8, 2024

Objective 6: Increase support for operations and special projects through foundation and government grants.

- Tactic 1:** Research and apply for unrestricted support grants (total above under Annual Fund)
- Tactic 2:** Research and apply for Restricted support grants
- Tactic 3:** Research and apply for Capital Support Grants
- Tactic 4:** Manage successful application awards; track reports and other deadlines

Objective 7: Plan and implement the quiet phase of a major comprehensive Capital Campaign. Hold for Board decision.

- Tactic 1:** Utilize the feasibility study, convening center business plan and other data to develop a campaign plan
- Tactic 2:** Determine priority projects to be included in campaign
- Tactic 3:** Recruit a campaign committee to assist the co-chairs leading the campaign
- Tactic 4:** Research 100+ identified top campaign prospects for cultivation.

Objective 8: Increase Earned Revenue through events and other activities designed to build relationships with constituents.

- Tactic 1:** Eclipse Programming and Special Fundraising - Collaborate with community partners to plan and implement a 3-day Eclipse event at The Wild Center and a special community fundraiser to celebrate the Total Eclipse in Tupper Lake.
- Tactic 2:** Expand External Rentals and raise \$60,000 in external event revenue.

Strategy 3: Strengthen community support, provide an auxiliary workforce and cultivate new relationships by recruiting, training and retaining a diverse cohort of active volunteers, including board members.

Objective 1: Grow the Volunteer Program. Engage and retain 175 active volunteers, and implement a new teen volunteer program.

- Tactic 1:** Collaborate with Rochester University Masters Program Students to digitally enhance the volunteer program. - Final handoff by the end of May 2024.
- Tactic 2:** Use new digital presence to help recruit for a new teen volunteer program - Online promotion on the website and signage around museum inside and out with QR codes to scan and pull up applications.
- Tactic 3:** Manage and update volunteer web pages regularly - Update as needed when additional opportunities and volunteer news arises.
- Tactic 4:** Plan and host a Volunteer thank you event. - Thank you event on July 11, 2024
- Tactic 5:** Work interdepartmentally to identify and post volunteer work opportunities

Objective 2: Encourage more Trustees and Advisory Board members to expand their volunteer activities to work with programming and relationship building.

- Tactic 1:** Development Committee - Maintain face-to-face interactions with our closest supporters at development events, such as Patron Circle Cocktail party on August 14, 2024.
- Tactic 2:** Take Five - Identify and refresh Take 5 lists and encourage more Board volunteers to participate.