

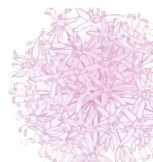


**CULTIVATE
LANCASTER**

**2023 - 2025
Strategic Plan**

CULTIVATE
LANCASTER
ENTREPRENEUR FORUM

Prepared by



allium
DEVELOPMENT GROUP LLC

Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition
Strategic Plan

prepared for
Lancaster City Alliance and ASSETS by



Updated March 8, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition, known as Cultivate Lancaster, is Lancaster County, Pennsylvania's, hub for startup and small business resources. It provides a platform for organizations who support small businesses to connect and collaborate; and, provides a platform for small businesses to identify resources, meet business support organizations, and network with each other.

The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan outlines ways that Cultivate Lancaster will meet its vision and mission over the next three years. *Essentially*, the plan is for Cultivate Lancaster to do what it already does but better, more intentionally, and to an audience across Lancaster County. Under this strategic plan, Cultivate Lancaster will engage small businesses through an increased community presence, with opportunities for feedback and participation in programmatic planning, and through thoughtfully curated events. Cultivate Lancaster will continue to support and improve small business programming quality and will now look to support big-picture initiatives, such as establishing an equitable local access to capital; collaborating across partners through tracking and managing data across organizations; weaving diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts throughout; and, taking on special projections as needed. The purpose behind all of the plans, goals, and activities is to improve small business success rates and to increase economic development in Lancaster County.

As a support to the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the Initiative Structure section details recommendations on how Cultivate Lancaster should function moving forward. A history of Cultivate Lancaster, description of terms used in the strategic plan, acknowledgements of participating individuals and organizations, research methodology, and study sources all document how this plan was conceived and the research and practices being implemented through it. The Elements of a Successful Small Business Ecosystem was used throughout the planning process to identify gaps and opportunities to move towards best practices within the ecosystem.

This strategic plan is the culmination of seven months of planning, meeting, collaborating, and dreaming for the future of Lancaster County's small business ecosystem.

A Brief History of Cultivate Lancaster

Cultivate Lancaster is a well-known and loved brand in the City of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The name captures the entrepreneurial spirit of the community as well as its agricultural roots. Started in 2015, Cultivate Lancaster began as an event, hosted by ASSETS and the Lancaster City Alliance, for entrepreneurs interested in connecting and learning how to grow their businesses. The success of the first event quickly grew into bi-annual events that occurred between 2015 and 2020.

In 2017, a group of business support organizations started meeting and discussing how they could better collaborate. This effort was called the Entrepreneurship Coalition and was led by ASSETS, the Lancaster City Alliance, SCORE Lancaster-Lebanon, Community First Fund, Duke Street Business Center, Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce, and Lancaster County EDC among others. The Coalition engaged Nancy Keeler, an independent consultant, to map the local entrepreneurial ecosystem and provide recommendations on how partners could better collaborate and alleviate redundancies in programming.

The recommendations from the initial ecosystem mapping study led to a merger of the Cultivate Lancaster and the Entrepreneurship Coalition with a mission to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs, small business owners, and business resource providers in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, to *connect, collaborate, and grow*. From 2018 until 2020, Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition launched a revamped website with an in

depth map of local resources for entrepreneurs. It held bi-annual events for entrepreneurs and provided a platform for resource providers to meet regularly and discuss new initiatives and opportunities to collaborate.

In early 2020, the Coalition (Cultivate Lancaster's resources providers) was in place and ready to play a key role as a platform for business resource providers to connect and stay informed on regulatory changes and economic recovery efforts in play for the local small business community. Cultivate Lancaster became the central point of contact for the Small Business Administration to relay information pertaining to local small businesses' recovery funds and access to federal programs. It played a key role in connecting and orchestrating a multi-organizational local grant and loan fund. From March to July of 2020, the group met every week to discuss updates and plans around small business economic recovery and support. Meetings then shifted from weekly to bi-weekly and then to monthly.

During the recovery efforts the Coalition began to recognize that many of the organizations at the table served, not only startups, but also small businesses. So, participating organizations decided to shift Cultivate Lancaster's focus from startups (idea phase to two years) to small businesses (with 20 or less employees). This change did not dramatically shift the conversation but opened a door for working on a more formalized structure and planning process for Cultivate Lancaster and this strategic planning effort.

How to Read the Plan

This strategic plan uses specific terms and techniques to identify who does what, when, and how. Cultivate Lancaster’s 2023-2025 Strategic Plan utilizes the following terms:



VISION STATEMENT
A description of the ideal future state of the organization. It articulates what the organization is trying to accomplish.



MISSION STATEMENT
A description of why the organization exists and why it does what it does.



CORE VALUES
Specific terms or words that are easy to absorb and memorize and reflect the guiding principles for the work.



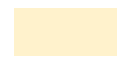
CATEGORIES
An organizational mechanism that groups *goals* with similar outcomes together.

GOAL #1

GOALS
A specific outcome that is made possible by a set of *activities*.



ACTIVITIES
Active steps necessary to accomplishing a *goal*.



LEAD
An individual or committee that is primarily accomplishing or driving a specific *activity*.



SUPPORT
Individuals or committees who provide guidance, review, and insight to the *lead* on a specific *activity*.



TIMELINE
Quarters and years when specific *activities* should be accomplished.

KEY

Each square represents the *lead* individual or committee for each activity. A circle indicates the *support* for the activity. This key is for the *goal timeline*.

- Cultivate Lancaster
- DEI Committee
- Events Committee
- Finance Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Marketing Partner
- Measurement & Tracking Committee
- Programming Committee
- Staff
- Steering Committee

MEASURE OF SUCCESS
A predetermined result that indicates that an activity has been accomplished.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This strategic plan was made possible by the collaboration and input from the following individuals and organizations:

Nancy Keeler, Principal, Allium Development Group LLC, organized and executed data collection, analysis, and report writing.

Rachel Luehm, researcher and graphic designer, independent contractor, provided data analysis and graphic design services.

Marshall Snively, Lancaster City Alliance; Jeremy Young, Lancaster City Alliance; and, Mike Mason, ASSETS, were primary liaisons for the project and provided real time guidance.

A leadership team advised on data collection and direction for the plan and included: Joaquin Villarreal, Franklin & Marshall College; Mike Mason, ASSETS; Jeremy Young, Lancaster City Alliance; and, Cheila Huettner, City of Lancaster.

Organizations who participated in the strategic planning process include: ASSETS, Ben Franklin Technology Partners, Candy Factory, City of Lancaster, Community First Fund, Duke Street Business Center, EDC of Lancaster County, Franklin & Marshall College, Kutztown University Small Business Development Center, Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Pennsylvania College of Art & Design, Small Business Administration, SCORE Lancaster-Lebanon, Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania, and Women Connect.

Special thanks to Greater Kalamazoo Business Resources Network and to Forge North for their insights and journey sharing on how to formalize an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Special thanks to Alma Felix, Lancaster County Community Foundation, and the Reinventing Our Communities Lancaster County Cohort for insight, guidance, and participation in the plan development process.

STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT & RESEARCH METHODS

Allium Development Group LLC prepared this strategic plan in June of 2022. In October of 2021, Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition, led by the Lancaster City Alliance and ASSETS, engaged Allium to partner in writing a strategic plan for how Cultivate Lancaster can better engage, support, and optimize successful outcomes for local small businesses. The specific anticipated outcomes from the plan included: solidifying an organizational structure, creating a decision making process, building purpose and buy-in for participating organizations, and setting a course for the immediate future. In the initial planning phase, diversity equity, and inclusion was identified early on as a specific focus area to be included throughout the plan.

As part of the strategic plan development process, Allium conducted one-on-one interviews with eighteen Lancaster County business support organizations, conducted a literature review on best practices for entrepreneurial ecosystems, interviewed two similar small business support collaboratives, led three focus area work groups, collaborated with the Reinventing Our Communities (ROC) Lancaster County Cohort, and reviewed data collected by Cultivate Lancaster between 2017 and 2021.

These activities occurred between October of 2021 and May of 2022 and were guided by a leadership team that included the following: Joaquin Villarreal, Franklin & Marshall College; Mike Mason, ASSETS; Jeremy Young, Lancaster City Alliance; and, Cheila Huettner, City of Lancaster.

Themes from the one-on-one interviews with participating Cultivate Lancaster organizations helped identify gaps, opportunities, and specific strategies for the new strategic plan. Interviews with Greater Kalamazoo Business Resources Network and Forge North helped identify practices and structure in other similarly organized collaborative efforts. And, a literature review of recommendations on collaborative business support networks helped identify elements necessary to a successful business support ecosystem.

These data points and themes were presented to Cultivate Lancaster in February of 2022. Using these data points and themes, the Leadership Team identified three focus areas for goals and activities in the new strategic plan, which included the following: organizational structure; business to business (B2B); and business to customer (B2C). Each focus area was then convened into a work group to investigate the topic, review best practices and research themes, and recommend goals and activities within the topic for the strategic plan.

The focus area work group on *organizational structure* examined how Cultivate Lancaster should be organized and structured moving forward. This work group included: Marshall Snively, Lancaster City Alliance; Mike Mason, ASSETS; Ezra Rothman, Lancaster County EDC; Ann Hughes,

Technology Council of Central PA; and John Dever, Kutztown University SBDC.

The focus area work group on *B2B* investigated how organizations who support small businesses can communicate and collaborate with each other through Cultivate Lancaster. This work group included the following: Tom Wallace, Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce; Cheila Huettner, City of Lancaster; Jeremy Young, Lancaster City Alliance; Alex Vasquez, ASSETS; Jaime Arroyo, Community Action Partnership; and, Matt Hannigan, Goodthree.

The focus area work group on *B2C* investigated how organizations who support small businesses can engage with small businesses as a collective and through Cultivate Lancaster. This work group included the following: Todd Snovel, PCA&D; Anne Kirby, Candy Factory; Joaquin Villarreal, Franklin & Marshall College; Larry Keating, SCORE Lancaster-Lebanon; Alex Vasquez, ASSETS; Jaime Arroyo, Community Action Partnership; and, Matt Hannigan, Goodthree.

Recommendations from the work groups were used during two open invitation strategic plan writing work sessions, which resulted in the mission, vision, core values, goals, and activities detailed in this plan.

A draft strategic plan was presented and distributed to all participating organizations in May of 2022 for review and feedback. Feedback and final adjustments were incorporated into the strategic plan under the guidance of the leadership team.

“Many hands make light work.”
- John Heywood



CULTIVATE LANCASTER



2023-2025 Strategic Plan

2023-2025 Strategic Plan Snapshot



MISSION

Cultivate Lancaster informs, navigates, connects, and coordinates entrepreneurs with business resource providers to achieve prosperity and equitable economic growth across Lancaster County.



VISION

Cultivate Lancaster is Lancaster County's recognized point of entry for entrepreneurs and organizations in the ecosystem, to provide equitable access to resources and inform strategies that drive a thriving and diverse business sector.



VALUES

Nurturing Entrepreneurship
Collaboration
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Community

>>> strategic plan goals <<<

ENGAGEMENT

1 | Marketing

Develop a sustainable marketing campaign that builds on and improves existing efforts and increases engagement.

2 | Feedback from Businesses

Create a platform for businesses to provide feedback to resources providers.

3 | Networking & Events

Building on momentum with increased gatherings, themed touchpoints, and opportunities for networking.

QUALITY

4 | Programming Collaboration

Resource providers will communicate effectively to identify an evolving continuum of resources, programming, and support for entrepreneurs.

5 | Measurement and Tracking

Establish metrics and tracking mechanisms to demonstrate success of mission and vision.

6 | DE&I

Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core value with actionable activities and measurable outcomes.

INITIATIVES

7 | Equitable Access to Capital

Heighten conversations and identify and develop equitable pathways to capital.

8 | Common Goals

Identify and advocate for common goals that cannot be addressed by any one organization or the Cultivate Lancaster as an initiative.

2023-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Cultivate Lancaster’s mission is to inform, navigate, connect, and coordinate entrepreneurs with business resources providers to achieve prosperity and equitable economic growth across Lancaster County. The initiative’s vision is to be Lancaster County’s recognized point of entry for entrepreneurs and organizations in the ecosystem, to provide equitable access to resources and to inform strategies that drive a thriving and diverse business sector. Its core values are diversity, equity, and inclusion, collaboration, community, and nurturing entrepreneurship.

This strategic plan’s goals can be summarized into three categories: Engagement, Quality, and Initiatives. Cultivate Lancaster will *engage* small businesses on available resources through effective marketing in person and online, provide businesses with opportunities to give feedback on local small business products and services, as well as, develop events and networking opportunities between resources

providers and small businesses.

Cultivate Lancaster will help ensure a high *quality* of resources for small businesses by providing a platform for organizations who support small businesses to communicate and collaborate with each other, measuring and tracking who provides services and potential overlaps and gaps in services and businesses served, as well as, integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core value across activities.

Cultivate Lancaster will take on special *initiatives* that meet specific needs and goals within the entrepreneurial ecosystem that most likely cannot be achieved without cross organizational participation and collaboration. The first of these special initiatives will be focused on equitable access to capital and will work towards the creation of broader access to capital for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) businesses.

The plan is comprised of eight goals and their associated activities that have been identified to achieve Cultivate Lancaster’s mission and vision. Each activity is accompanied by a lead and one or more support individual(s) or committee(s) and the timeline for when the activity should be accomplished. This plan is a guide and can and should be adapted as necessary to the changing small business landscape in Lancaster County. This plan was formed with significant input and collaboration to be a unified vision of where Lancaster County’s entrepreneurial ecosystem can go from here.



GOAL #1 | MARKETING

Develop a sustainable marketing campaign that builds on and improves existing efforts and increases engagement

Cultivate Lancaster will undergo a brand refresh, website update, and community awareness campaign with an aim of better communicating available local resources and options to local entrepreneurs both online and in person. A Marketing Committee will be formed with participation from marketing leads from participating organizations as well as other interested organizations and businesses.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and convene a **Marketing Committee**

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of committee

ACTIVITY #2:
Develop a **Community Awareness Campaign** that includes: design of printed materials, identification and roles of community partners, and is in conjunction with website revamp

LEAD: **Marketing Committee**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff; marketing partner

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Community Awareness Plan

ACTIVITY #3:
Total **website revamp** including: user friendly navigation design, simplified language, and is available in other languages (i.e.: spanish)

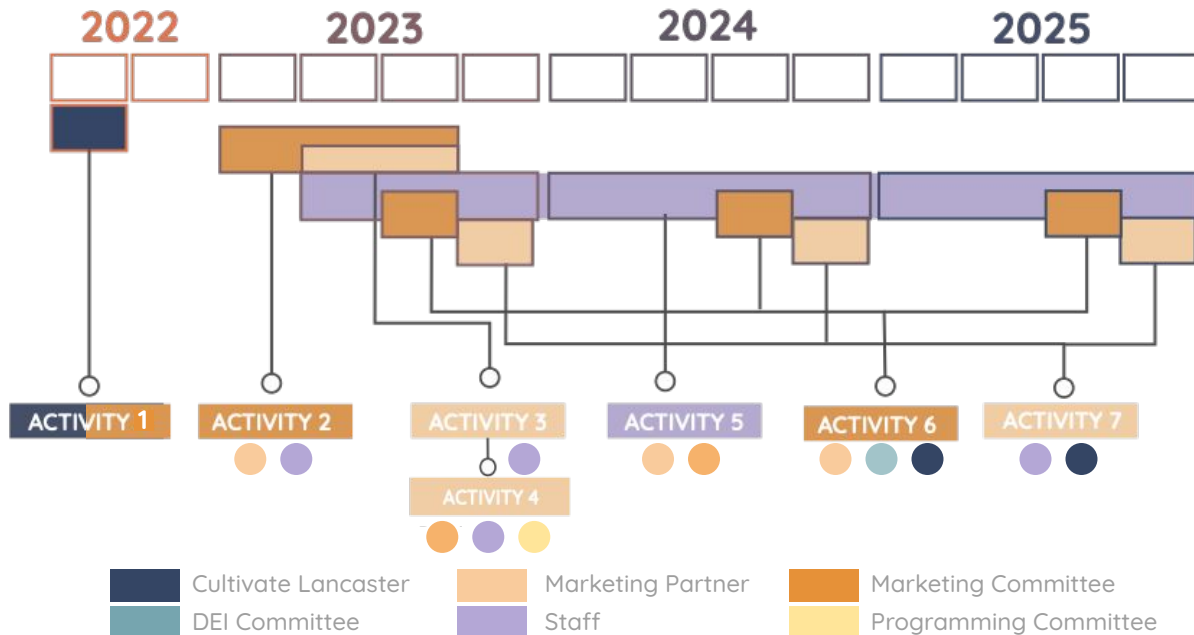
LEAD: **marketing partner**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
200% increase in site traffic
Improved site rankings

ACTIVITY #4:
Develop an online, interactive, and easily navigable **hub of resources** for businesses

LEAD: **marketing partner**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff; Programming Committee, Marketing Committee

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Resource providers track "where did you find out about us?"



GOAL #1 | MARKETING cont'd

Develop a sustainable marketing campaign that builds on and improves existing efforts and increases engagement

Cultivate Lancaster will undergo a brand refresh, website update, and community awareness campaign with an aim of better communicating available local resources and options to local entrepreneurs both online and in person. A Marketing Committee will be formed with participation from marketing leads from participating organizations as well as other interested organizations and businesses.

ACTIVITY #5:
Enact Community Awareness Campaign

SUPPORT:
Cultivate Lancaster staff
 SUPPORT: marketing partner, marketing committee

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
 200% increase in website traffic
 Improved site rankings

ACTIVITY #6:
 Coordinate an annual **BIPOC business promotional campaign** across all resources providers

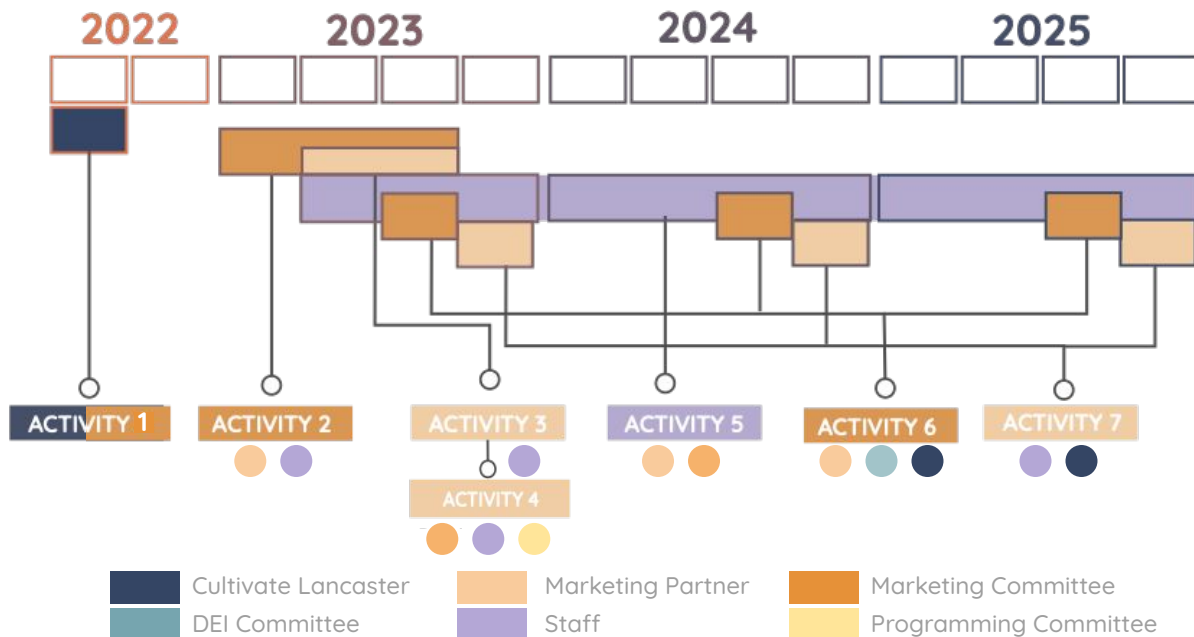
LEAD:
Marketing Committee
 SUPPORT: DEI committee, marketing partner, Cultivate Lancaster

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
 75% participation of resource provider organizations

ACTIVITY #7:
 Develop and implement mechanism for keeping website up to date

LEAD: **marketing partner**
 SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff; Cultivate Lancaster

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
 100% participation from resource providers



GOAL # 2 | FEEDBACK FROM BUSINESSES

Create a platform for businesses to provide feedback to resources providers

Cultivate Lancaster will collect and incorporate feedback from entrepreneurs on programming needs and opportunities through a data collection platform on the Cultivate Lancaster website. Entrepreneurs will have an opportunity to provide regular and specific feedback that will be shared with the Programming Committee.

ACTIVITY #1:
Establish categories and questions for information to collect from businesses

LEAD: **Measurement and Tracking Committee**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff; marketing partner

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Increase traffic to website and use of form

ACTIVITY #2:
Create **feedback form** on website

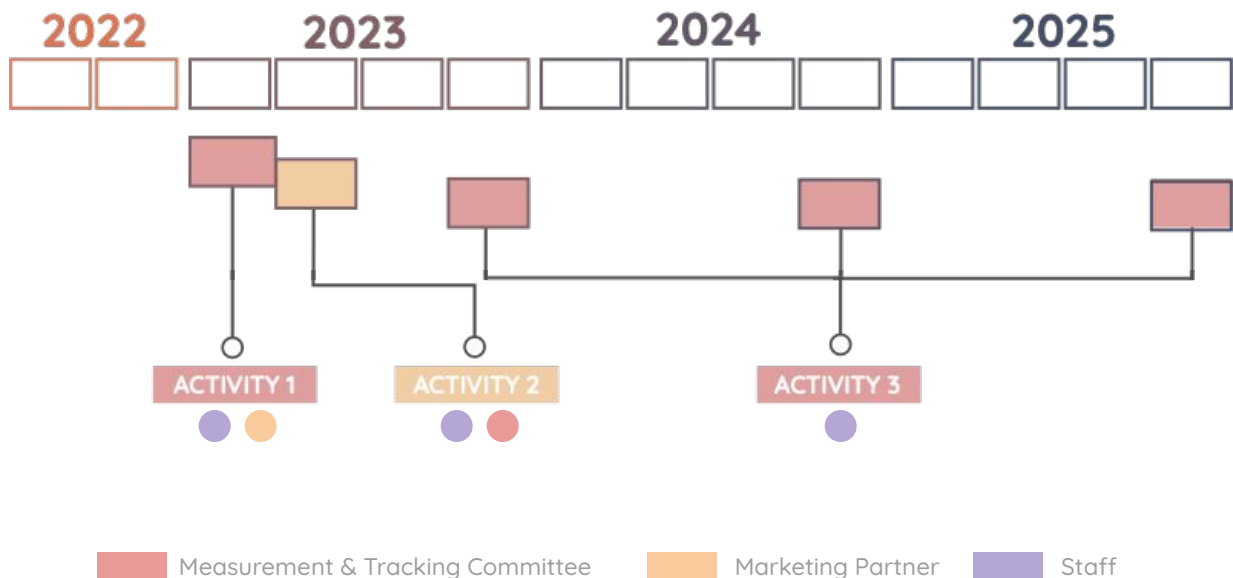
LEAD: **marketing partner**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff; Measurement and Tracking Committee

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Increase traffic to website and use of form

ACTIVITY #3:
Data evaluation and distribution to Programming Committee

LEAD: **Measurement and Tracking Committee**
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Annual report of data to Programming Committee



GOAL # 3 | NETWORKING AND EVENTS

Building momentum with increased gatherings, themed touchpoints, and opportunities for networking.

Cultivate Lancaster will continue regularly scheduled events that facilitate networking and connection between resources providing organizations and small businesses.

See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and convene an
Events Committee

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of committee

ACTIVITY #2:
1 - 2 **Cultivate events** per
year

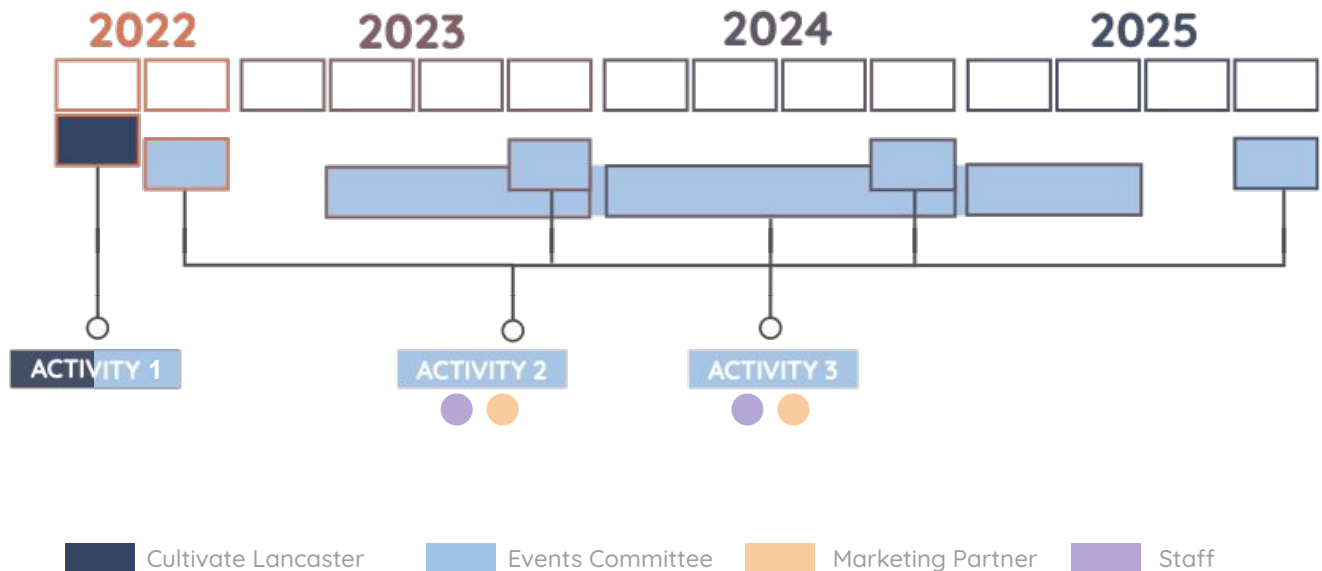
LEAD: **Events Committee**
SUPPORT: Cultivate
Lancaster staff; marketing
partner

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
80% attendance to event
RSVPs/registration
Average 4.5 or higher
satisfaction score on event
survey

ACTIVITY #3:
Quarterly **casual Cultivate
events**

LEAD: **Events Committee**
SUPPORT: Cultivate
Lancaster staff; marketing
partner

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
80% attendance to event
RSVPs/registration
Average 4.5 or higher
satisfaction score on event
survey



GOAL # 4 | PROGRAMMING COLLABORATION

Resource providers will communicate effectively to identify an evolving continuum of resources, programming, and support for entrepreneurs

Cultivate Lancaster will convene a Programming Committee for the explicit purpose of gathering practitioners and programming decision makers in the same room regularly to share activities and programming updates with each other. The committee will develop a glossary of shared terminology to describe local programming activities. The glossary will be incorporated on the Cultivate Lancaster website by the Marketing Partner with support by Staff. Organizations will be able to incorporate the terminology individually to create ease of process for entrepreneurs navigating the ecosystem. See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and convene a **Programming Committee** of programming leads and with regularly scheduled meetings

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of committee

ACTIVITY #2:
Create a **glossary of shared terms** across resource providers

LEAD: **Programming Committee**

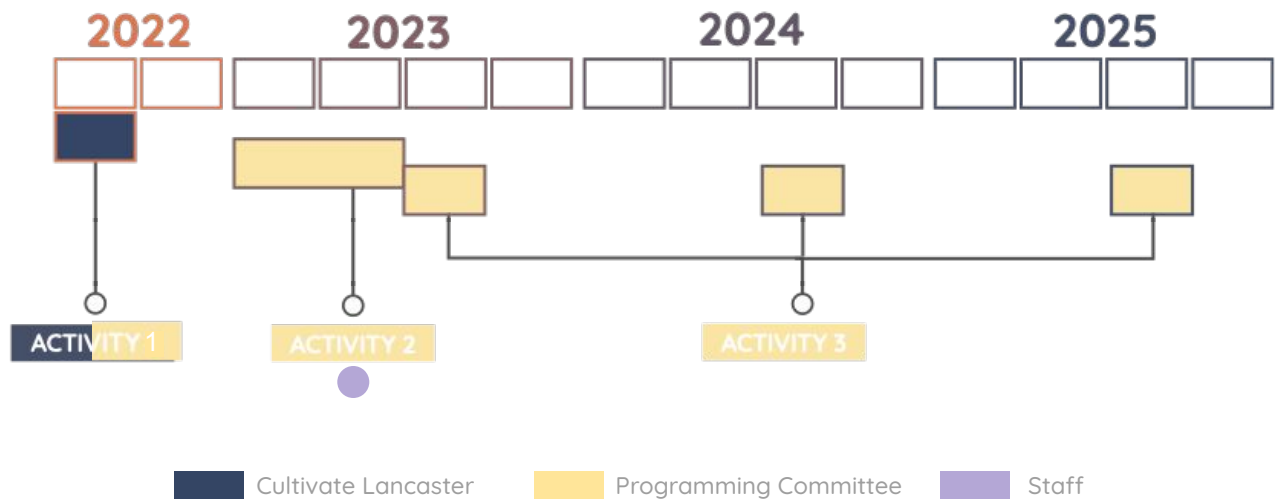
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
100% of resources providers usage of glossary

ACTIVITY #3:
Provide an annual update on programming to each other and to Cultivate Lancaster

LEAD: **Programming Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Decrease in duplication of programming and increase in collaboration across partners



GOAL # 5 | MEASUREMENT AND TRACKING

Establish metrics and tracking mechanisms to demonstrate success of mission and vision

Since 2017, Cultivate Lancaster has tracked and measured Cultivate Lancaster relationships across participating organizations and to whom organizations provide services. To build on these efforts, Cultivate Lancaster will convene a Measurement and Tracking Committee who will review data collection efforts by Cultivate to date, assess data collection practices of participating organizations, and align an improved metric for collecting data moving forward. The data collection process will center on providing supporting evidence for access to funding to support local small businesses and economic development efforts. The data collection will also be used as a metrics to ensure that strategic goals and values are being met. Once established, data will be collected annually and findings will be distributed to organizations by Staff. See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and convene a
Measurement and Tracking Committee

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of committee

ACTIVITY #2:
Establish metrics with strategic goals and values and determine process to collect and analyze data

LEAD: **Measurement and Tracking Committee**

SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Identify benchmarks

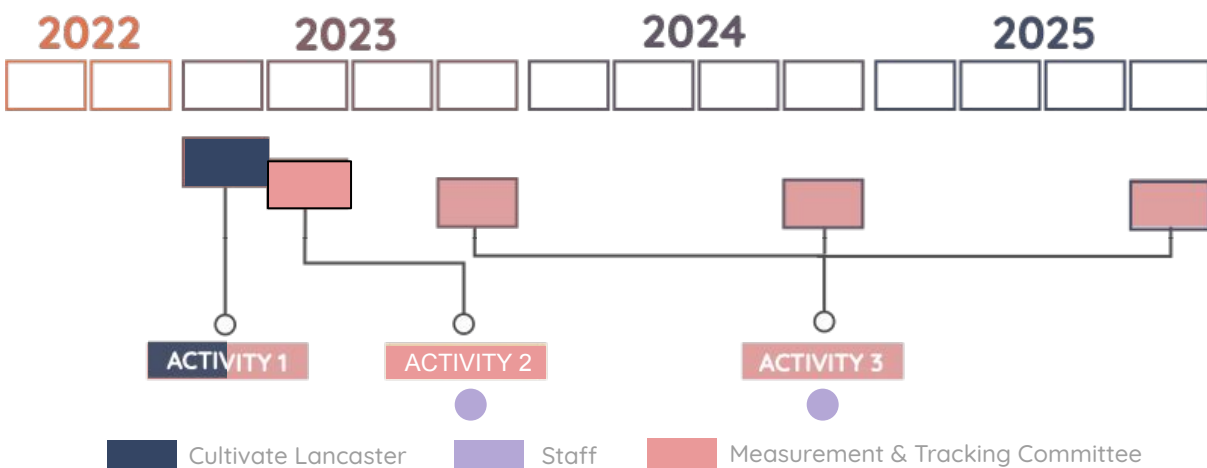
Establish data collection process

ACTIVITY #3:
Collect Data and analysis

LEAD: **Measurement and Tracking Committee**

SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Data that is compared and collected year over year



GOAL # 6 | DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core value with actionable activities and measurable outcomes.

Cultivate Lancaster will convene a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to ensure that DEI is infused as a core value across Cultivate Lancaster goals and activities. The Committee will develop specific guidance on how participating organizations can better engage diverse communities through marketing, language, and access to products and services. The Committee will develop and implement a tool that will measure each organizations efforts around DEI activities and will provide a stamp of approval for organization’s who meet this criteria. The stamp of approval will be made visible to the broader community through branding by the Marketing Partner. The Committee will also work with Cultivate Staff to identify and create DEI and cultural competency training opportunities for participating organizations. See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and convene a **DEI Committee**

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of DEI Committee

ACTIVITY #2:
Develop guidance for **resource providers to incorporate DEI** within their organizations (with specific considerations for financial institutions)

LEAD: **DEI Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
A document containing measurable ways that resources providers can incorporate DEI into their organizations

ACTIVITY #3:
Develop and implement a mechanism for recognizing organizations who have met certain standards around DEI

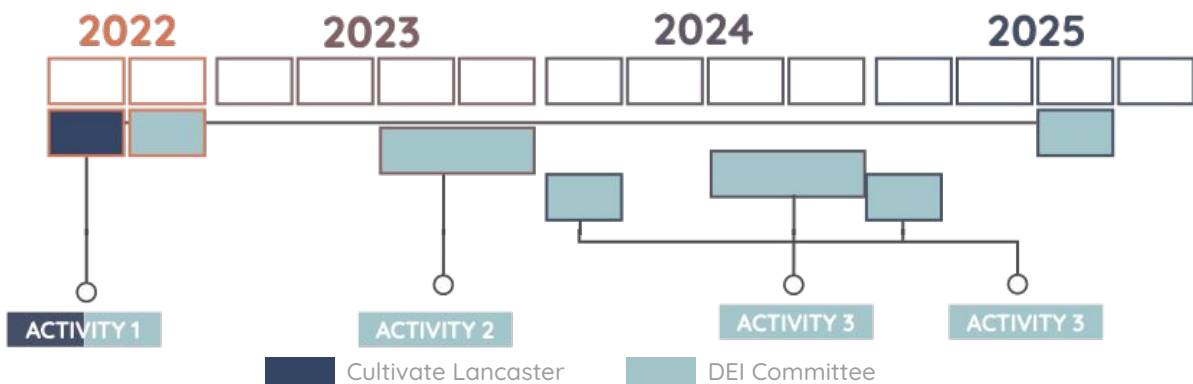
LEAD: **DEI Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
A stamp of recognition for organizations who meet measured standards and recognition on the Cultivate Lancaster website.

ACTIVITY #4:
Provide a **platform for support** and training on cultural competency for resource providers

LEAD: **DEI Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Biannual to quarterly opportunities for resource providers’ staff to participate in trainings and activities



GOAL # 7 | EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CAPITAL

Heighten conversations and identify and develop equitable pathways to capital.

Cultivate Lancaster’s Financial Services Committee, prior to 2020, regularly met and discussed lending needs across the business community. The committee will reconvene and be made up of one representative from each participating organization who provides financial services to small businesses. With the support of Staff, the committee will regularly inform participating organizations about their available products and services for small businesses and will develop a guide for how small businesses can best prepare for accessing local capital. This guide will be made available online and in print by the Marketing Partner. The committee will also investigate the creation of a capital fund centered on equitable access and will onboard new partners as needed in this effort. See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Identify and reconvene the **Financial Services Committee**

LEAD: **Cultivate Lancaster**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Reconvening of Financial Services Committee

ACTIVITY #2:
Inform resource providers on products, process, and support

LEAD: **Financial Services Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Annual presentation to resource providers on products and services

ACTIVITY #3:
Provide guidance on business preparation and process transparency

LEAD: **Financial Services Committee**

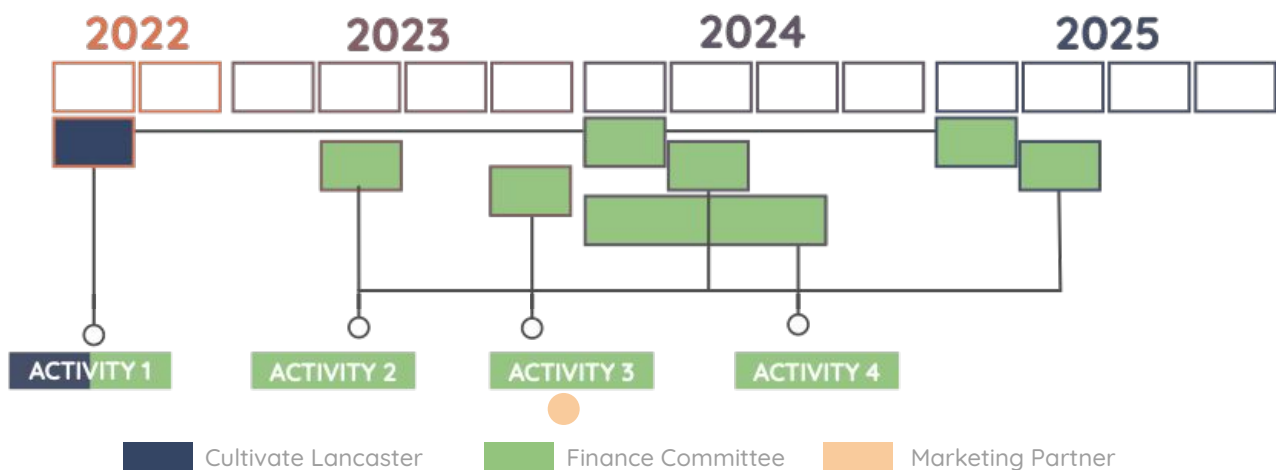
SUPPORT: marketing partner

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Documentation for website detailing products, process, and offerings for each participating financial institution

ACTIVITY #4:
Convening a committee to investigate the creation of an **equitable access capital fund**

LEAD: **Financial Services Committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of an equitable access to capital fund or pathway specifically designed for BIPOC businesses



GOAL # 8 | COMMON GOALS

Identify and advocate for common goals that cannot be addressed by any one organization or the Cultivate Lancaster as an initiative

Cultivate Lancaster’s Steering Committee will provide guidance and oversight to the initiative and Staff and will serve the specific purpose of occasionally identifying and moving forward specific common goals. The committee will develop a mechanism for identifying common goals as well as mechanisms for addressing these goals. This may take the form of independently funded projects or cross-organizational collaborative efforts. The committee will also receive training on how to collectively advocate for policy changes, specifically barriers to the economic success of small businesses in Lancaster County. See Initiative Structure for details on committee formation and governance.

ACTIVITY #1:
Convene the **Steering Committee**

LEAD: **Strategic Plan Leadership Team**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of Steering Committee with signed MOU

ACTIVITY #2:
Create mechanism to **identify common goals** across Cultivate Lancaster that are not already covered in this strategic plan

LEAD: **Steering committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Creation of mechanism to identify common goals

ACTIVITY #3:
Steering committee members and Cultivate Lancaster staff members receive training on how to advocate for policy changes

LEAD: **Steering Committee**

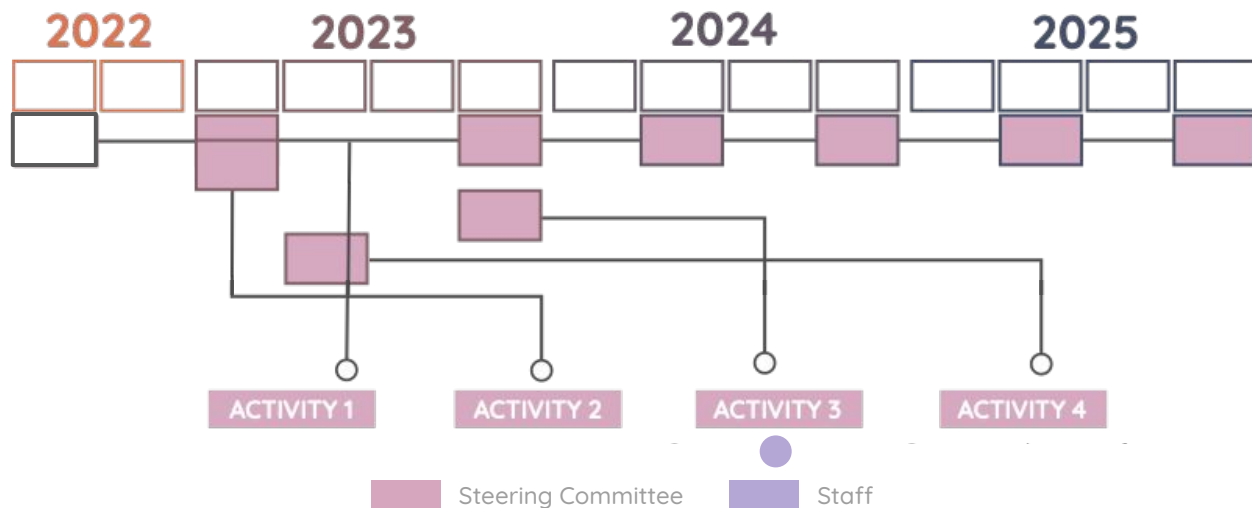
SUPPORT: Cultivate Lancaster Staff

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
100% participation of steering committee in policy training

ACTIVITY #4:
Enact **mechanisms for addressing common goals** including independently funded projects

LEAD: **Steering committee**

MEASURE OF SUCCESS:
Annual implementation of 2-3 “common goal” projects administered by independent contractors



Timeline by Lead & Support

			2022		2023				2024				2025			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
LEADERSHIP TEAM																
		Establish Plan Buy-in Across Coalition	X													
		Confirm Host Organization	X													
		Onboard Organization & Hire Staff		X												
CULTIVATE LANCASTER																
		Whole Cultivate Lancaster Meeting	X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene a Marketing Committee	X													
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the Events Committee	X													
#4 Programming Collaboration	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the Programming Committee of programming leads with regularly scheduled meetings	X													
#5 Measurement & Tracking	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the Measurement and Tracking Committee		X												
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the DEI Committee	X	X											X	
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the Financial Services Committee	X					X				X				
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #6:	Coordinate an annual BIPOC business promotional campaign across all resources providers				X			X					X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #7:	Develop and implement mechanism for keeping website up to date					X			X					X	
FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE																
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #1:	Convene the Financial Services Committee	X					X				X				
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #2:	Inform resources providers on products, process, and support			X			X					X			
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #3:	Provide guidance on business preparation and process transparency				X										
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #4:	Investigate the creation of an equitable access capital fund and onboard partners						X	X	X						
MEASUREMENT & TRACKING COMMITTEE																
#2 Feedback from Businesses	ACTIVITY #1:	Establish categories and questions for information to collect from businesses	X													
#2 Feedback from Businesses	ACTIVITY #3:	Data evaluation and distribution				X			X				X			
#5 Measurement & Tracking	ACTIVITY #2:	Establish metrics with strategic goals and values and determine process to collect and analyze data			X											
#5 Measurement & Tracking	ACTIVITY #3:	Collect Data and analysis				X				X					X	
#2 Feedback from Businesses	ACTIVITY #2:	Create feedback form on website		X												

Timeline by Lead & Support

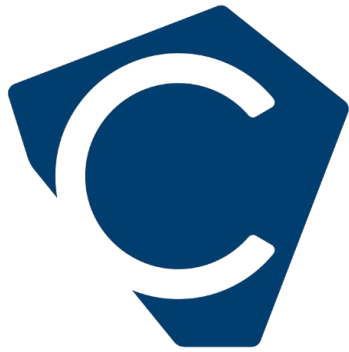
			2022	2023	2024	2025
MARKETING PARTNER						
#2 Feedback from Businesses	ACTIVITY #2:	Create feedback form on website		X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #3:	Total website revamp including: user friendly navigation design, simplified language, and is available in other languages (i.e.: spanish)		X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #4:	Develop an online interactive and easily navigable hub of resources for businesses		X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #7:	Develop and implement mechanism for keeping website up to date		X	X	X
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #3:	Provide guidance on business preparation and process transparency		X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #2:	Develop a Community Awareness Campaign that includes: design of printed materials, identification and roles of community partners, and is in conjunction with website revamp		X X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #6:	Coordinate an annual BIPOC business promotional campaign across all resources providers		X	X	X
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #5:	Enact Community Awareness Campaign		X X X X X X	X X X X	X X X X
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #2:	1 - 2 Cultivate events per year	X	X	X	X
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #3:	Quarterly casual Cultivate events		X	X	X
#4 Programming Collaboration	ACTIVITY #2:	Create a glossary of shared terms across resource providers		X X		
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #3:	Develop and implement a mechanism for recognizing organizations who have met certain standards around DEI			X X	
MARKETING COMMITTEE						
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #2:	Develop a Community Awareness Campaign that includes: design of printed materials, identification and roles of community partners, and is in conjunction with website revamp		X X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #7:	Coordinate an annual BIPOC business promotional campaign across all resources providers		X	X	X
STAFF						
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #5:	Enact Community Awareness Campaign		X X	X X X X	X X X X
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #1:	Convene the Financial Services Committee	X		X	X
#7 Equitable Access to Capital	ACTIVITY #2:	Inform resources providers on products, process, and support		X	X	X
#5 Measurement & Tracking	ACTIVITY #2:	Establish metrics with strategic goals and values and determine process to collect and analyze data		X X		

Timeline by Lead & Support

			2022	2023	2024	2025
STAFF cont'd						
#5 Measurement & Tracking	ACTIVITY #4:	Collect Data		X	X	X
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #7:	Develop and implement mechanism for keeping website up to date		X	X	X
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #2:	Develop a Community Awareness Campaign that includes: design of printed materials, identification and roles of community partners, and is in conjunction with website revamp	X	X X		
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #2:	1 - 2 Cultivate events per year	X	X	X	X
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #3:	Quarterly casual Cultivate events		X	X	X
#4 Programming Collaboration	ACTIVITY #3:	Meet annually to educate, update, and collaborate with each other on programming		X	X	X
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #4:	Provide a platform for support and training on cultural competency for resources providers			X	X
#8 Common Goals	ACTIVITY #3:	Steering committee members and Cultivate Lancaster staff members receive training on how to advocate for policy changes		X		
EVENTS COMMITTEE						
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #2:	1 - 2 Cultivate events per year	X	X	X	X
#3 Networking & Events	ACTIVITY #3:	Quarterly casual Cultivate events		X	X	X
PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE						
#4 Programming Collaboration	ACTIVITY #2:	Create a glossary of shared terms across resource providers	X	X		
#4 Programming Collaboration	ACTIVITY #3:	Meet annually to educate, update, and collaborate with each other on programming		X	X	X
#2 Feedback from Businesses	ACTIVITY #3:	Data evaluation and distribution		X	X	X
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #3:	Total website revamp including: user friendly navigation design, simplified language, and is available in other languages (i.e.: spanish)		X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #6:	Develop and implement mechanism for keeping website up to date		X	X	X
DEI COMMITTEE						
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #1:	Convene the DEI Committee	X			X
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #2:	Develop guidance for resources providers to incorporate DEI within their organizations (with specific considerations for financial institutions)		X X		

Timeline by Lead & Support

			2022	2023	2024	2025
DEI COMMITTEE cont'd						
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #3:	Develop and implement a mechanism for recognizing organizations who have met certain standards around DEI			X X	
#6 DEI	ACTIVITY #4:	Provide a platform for support and training on cultural competency for resources providers			X	X
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #3:	Total website revamp including: user friendly navigation design, simplified language, and is available in other languages (i.e.: spanish)		X X		
#1 Marketing	ACTIVITY #7:	Coordinate an annual BIPOC business promotional campaign across all resources providers		X	X	X
STEERING COMMITTEE						
#8 Common Goals	ACTIVITY #1:	Identify and convene the Steering Committee	X	X	X X	X X
#8 Common Goals	ACTIVITY #2:	Create mechanism to identify and then identify common goals across Cultivate Lancaster that are not already covered in this strategic plan	X			
#8 Common Goals	ACTIVITY #3:	Steering committee members and Cultivate Lancaster staff members receive training on how to advocate for policy changes			X	
#8 Common Goals	ACTIVITY #4:	Create mechanisms for addressing common goals including independently funded projects		X		



CULTIVATE LANCASTER

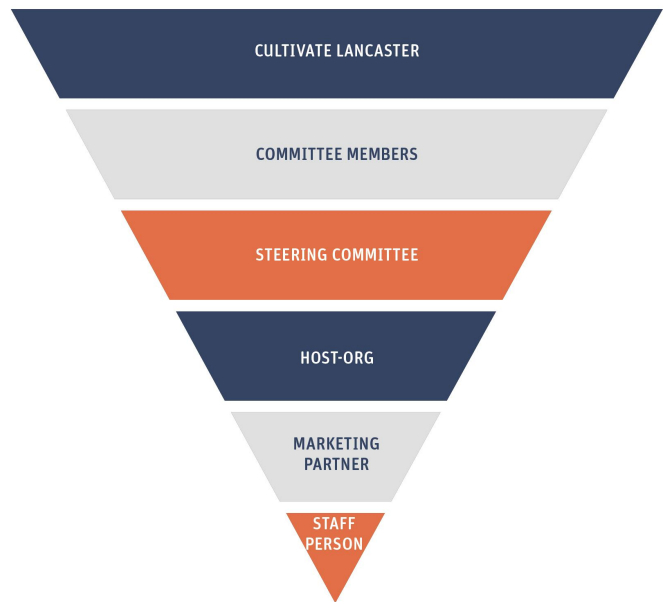
Initiative Structure

Initiative Structure

Cultivate Lancaster will be structured as an initiative of an existing Lancaster County organization. As an initiative, Cultivate Lancaster will operate at arms length from its host organization and may or may not be associated with the brand of the host organization. Under this model, Cultivate Lancaster will have a “steering” committee that will be engaged in the operations of Cultivate Lancaster, while the host organization will provide administration and have a standing seat on this committee.

The initiative structure will allow partner organizations to have meaningful input and buy-in into the strategies and activities of Cultivate Lancaster, while Cultivate Lancaster will have necessary administrative support from its host organization. The steering committee will collaborate with the host organization to hire a staff member to coordinate the initiative and a marketing partner to implement marketing activities. Most of the efforts of the initiative will be accomplished through working “standing committees” with specific goals and activities that are supported by the staff and marketing partner.

Most of Cultivate Lancaster’s standing committees will be open to participation from Cultivate Lancaster’s partner organizations, municipal representatives and staff, professional services providers, small business owners and representatives, and other interested community members. The



Steering Committee and Financial Services Committee will have specific membership based on their specific goals.

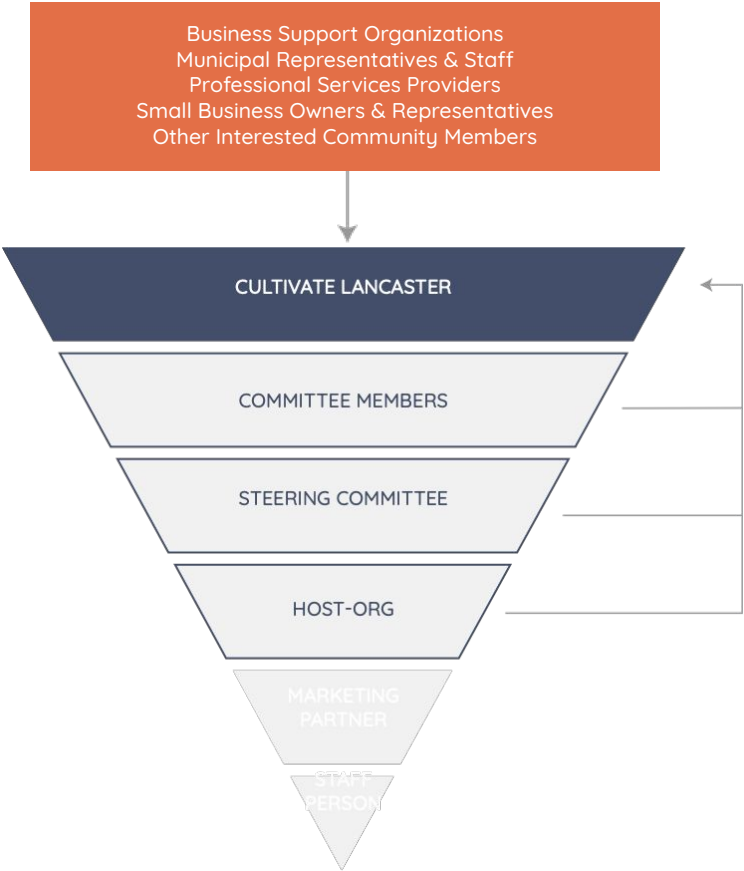
The above image shows how many goals and activities will be accomplished through coordination of a staff member, implementation of marketing by a marketing partner, oversight by the host and steering committee, and activities driven by committees and informed by the larger Cultivate Lancaster network.

The initiative structure will be financially supported by membership payments from the steering committee and membership, corporate sponsorships, and grant funds for special projects. The following section discusses each role within Cultivate Lancaster in more detail.

Cultivate Lancaster Membership

Cultivate Lancaster’s membership will be open to participation from Cultivate Lancaster’s partner business support organizations, municipal representatives and staff, professional services providers, small business owners and representatives, and other interested community members. Participation in Cultivate Lancaster meetings will be free and open to the public. Participation on social media platforms, web, and email forums will be free and open to the public. Participation in events may involve a fee or may be free as determined by fundraising and sponsorship needs.

A membership fee will be required from any organization with voting authority on the governing Steering Committee. A membership fee will be requested from any organization or individual actively engaging on Cultivate Lancaster’s Standing Committees. Any organization or individual may join Cultivate Lancaster by paying a fee and will receive member benefits as outlined annually by the Steering Committee.



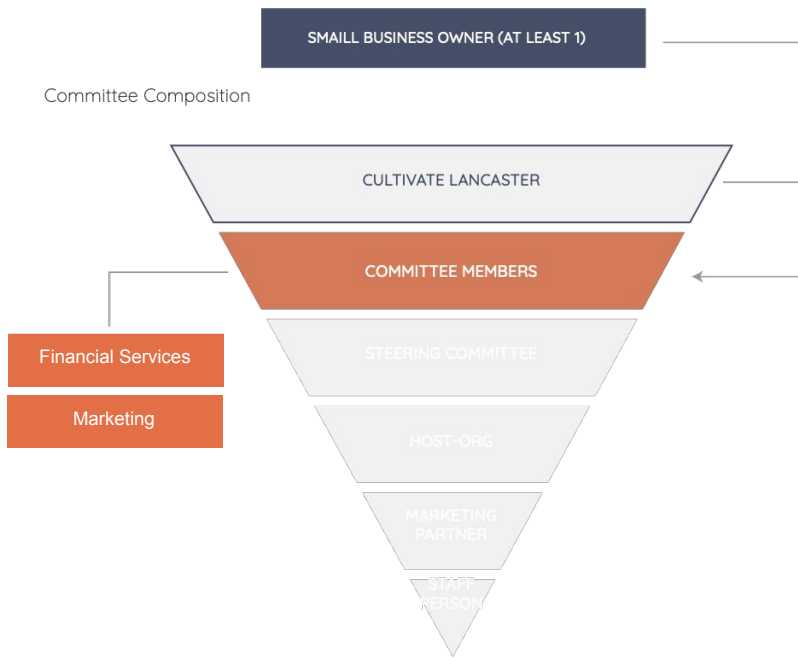
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- An organization actively engaged in Cultivate Lancaster activities and common goals
- Staff members or volunteers participate on committees for goals, events, and initiatives

QUALIFICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION:

- Provide services or operate in Lancaster County
- May or may not financially support the Initiative

Standing Committees



Cultivate Lancaster’s Standing Committees will be working committees made up of volunteers from Cultivate Lancaster’s membership. Every committee will have at least one small business owner or representative to help ensure that their efforts are mindful of and engaging the small business community. Standing Committees will follow Robert’s Rules of Order and will be led by a designated Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will be appointed by the Steering Committee and will receive support from the Cultivate Lancaster staff to accomplish goals and activities outlined in this strategic plan.

Committee members will actively engage in accomplishing activities and will commit to a term of 24 months on the committee.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Committee has a chair

- Accomplish strategic plan activities as assigned

- Working committees-members are engaged in accomplishing tasks

- Term commitment of at least 24 months

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION:

- CLEC staff can reassign members as needed
- Participation of 80% of meetings
- Small business owner (at least 1 seat unless otherwise noted)

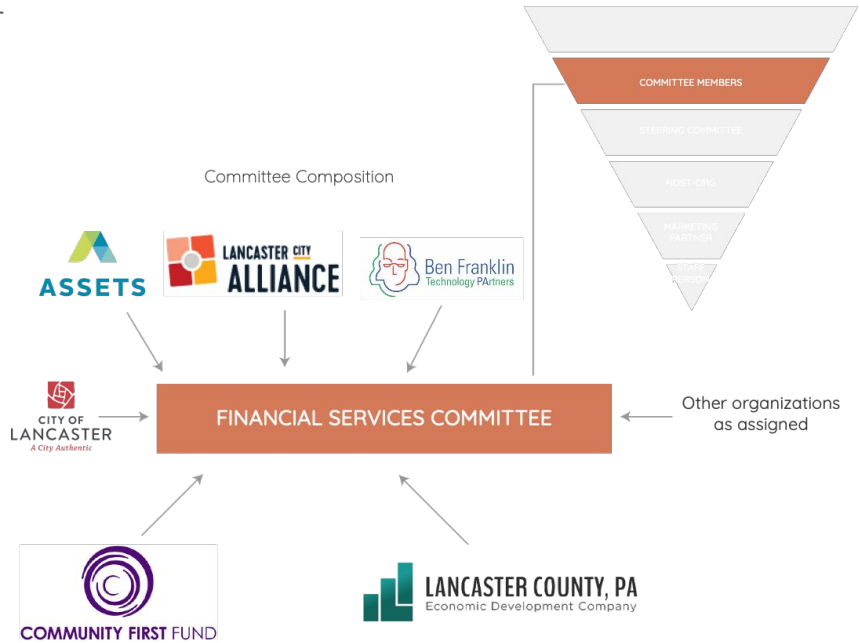
NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

- Minimum 3 to maximum 10 members

Financial Services Committees

The Financial Services Committee performs the specific task of investigating and collaborating on ease of access to capital for small businesses. This task may involve sensitive conversations on financial data and cannot always be open to the public. For this reason, this committee will be made up of staff members from organizations who administer state and federal financial programs for small businesses, they include ASSETS, Ben Franklin Technology Partners, City of Lancaster, Community First Fund, Lancaster City Alliance, and the Lancaster County EDC. Other organizations may be added as necessary.

The Financial Services Committee will follow governance guidelines as outlined for Standing Committees. If a member is unable to complete his or her term, his or her organization will be responsible for identifying a replacement.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Committee has a chair

- Accomplish strategic plan activities as assigned

- Working committees—members are engaged in accomplishing tasks

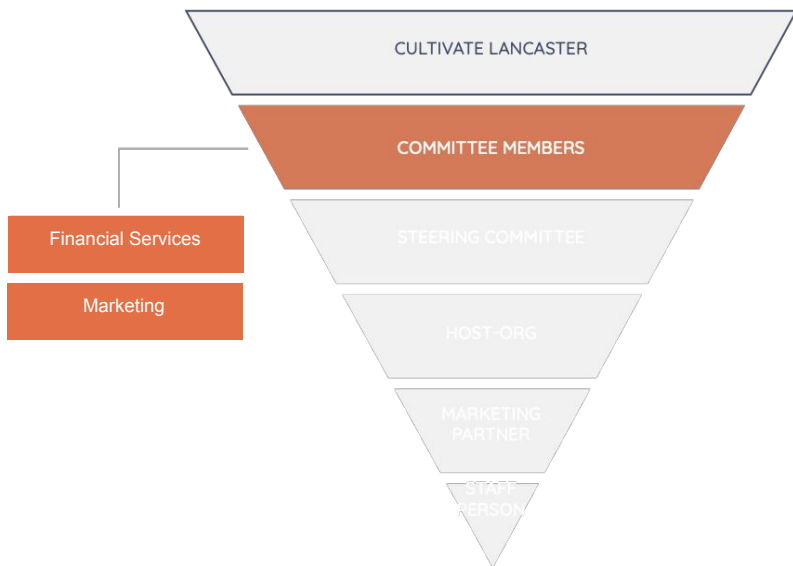
→ Term commitment of at least 24 months

- ◆ Individual from organization
- ◆ Organization helps fill seat
- ◆ CLEC staff can reassign members as needed
- ◆ Participation of 80% of meetings

NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

→ 1 per participating organization

Marketing Committees



The Marketing Committee performs the specific tasks of providing a sounding board to Cultivate Lancaster as well as actively engaging in the distribution of information across Cultivate Lancaster. This committee should be made up of representatives from the marketing departments of Cultivate Lancaster members. Organizations who have inhouse marketing departments or have capacity to lend staff to this important collaborative task should participate on the committee.

The Marketing Committee will follow governance guidelines as outlined for Standing Committees. If a member is unable to complete his or her term, his or her organization will be responsible for identifying a replacement.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Committee has a chair

- Accomplish strategic plan activities as assigned

- Working committees-members are engaged in accomplishing tasks

- Term commitment of at least 24 months

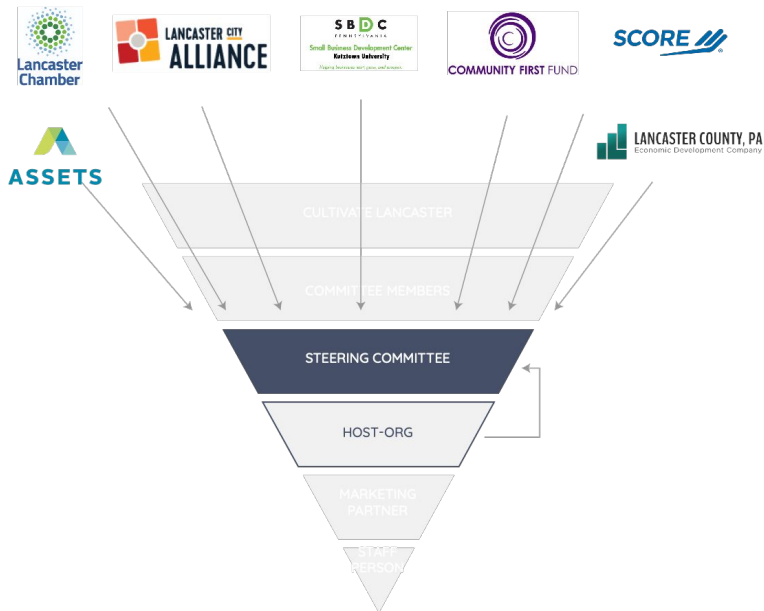
COMMITTEE COMPOSITION:

- Individual from organization
- Organization helps fill seat
- CLEC staff can reassign members as needed
- Participation of 80% of meetings

NUMBER OF MEMBERS:

- 1 per participating organization

Steering Committee



Cultivate Lancaster’s Steering Committees will be a working committees made up of Cultivate Lancaster’s paying membership. Voting members of the committee will include one representative from the following organizations: ASSETS, Community First Fund, Lancaster City Alliance, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, Lancaster County EDC, Kutztown University SBDC, and SCORE Lancaster-Lebanon. Each voting member organization must sign the initiative’s memorandum of understanding and be a financial contributor.

The Steering Committees will follow Robert’s Rules of Order and will be led by an elected Committee Chair and Co-Chair. The Steering Committee will oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan, appoint standing committee chairs, and manage the initiative staff and marketing partner.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Hires and fires staff
- Oversee that strategic goals are being met
- Sets budget and appropriate
- Follows Robert’s Rules

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ROLE:

- MOU signer
- Financial contributor (in-kind or monetarily)

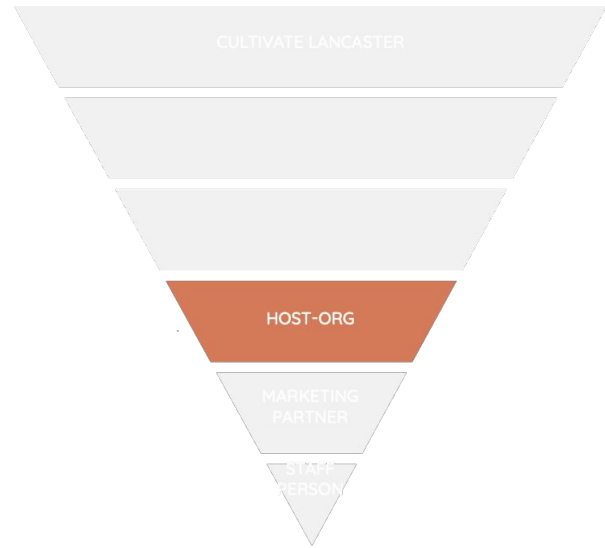
MEMBER ROLES:

- Members are engaged in accomplishing tasks
- Term commitment of at least 24 months
 - ◆ Individual from organization
 - ◆ Organization helps fill seat
 - ◆ CLEC staff can reassign members as needed
 - ◆ Participation of 80% of meetings

Host Organization

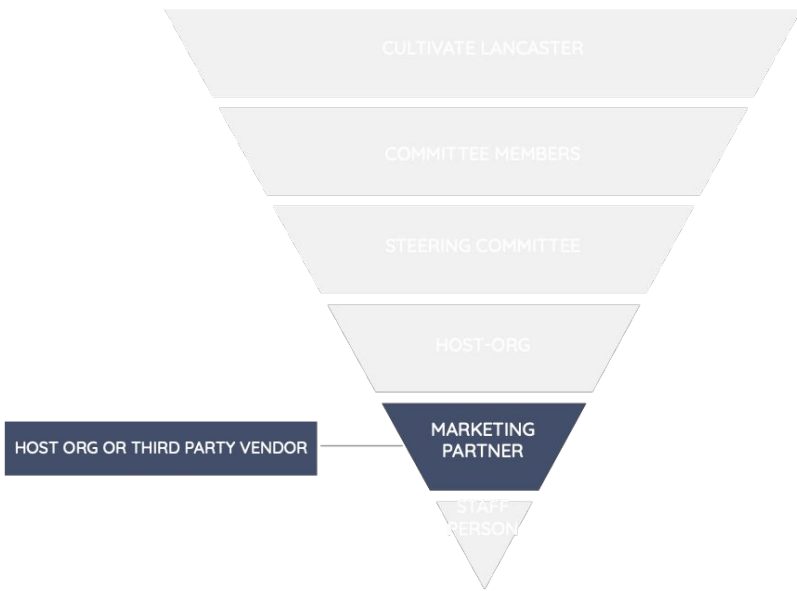
Cultivate Lancaster is seeking a host organization. The current host, the Lancaster City Alliance, has been home to Cultivate Lancaster since 2015; however, the new countywide focus of the initiative no longer fits the LCA’s service area.

The Organizational Structure Work Group identified several local organizations as potential candidates for the host role. Final details around host roles and responsibilities in relationship with Cultivate Lancaster and its Steering Community will be determined as the new host is onboarded. Below is a list of recommendations from the work group.



<p>RESPONSIBILITIES:</p>	<p>BENEFITS TO HOST:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Fiduciary holder → May or may not host CLEC marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Supporting a known brand that is being replicated by other organizations → Results of new business starts, capital formation, jobs created by Cultivate Lancaster membership
<p>QUALITIES:</p>	<p>QUALIFICATIONS FOR ROLE:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Already involved in supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs → Operates with an equity lens → Provides county-wide services → Be a trusted brand or be willing to allow CLEC to operate outside of its brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → MOU signer → Financial contributor (in-kind or monetarily)

Marketing Partner



Cultivate Lancaster’s Marketing Partner will play the unique role of envisioning, activating, and supporting the implementation of a revised Cultivate Lancaster brand. The Marketing Partner will work closely with Staff to implement goals and activities as assigned within the Strategic Plan and will report to the Steering Committee. This role may be completed by marketing at the host’s organization, but preferably by a third party vendor.

Part of the Marketing Partner’s activities includes revamping the Cultivate Lancaster website, creating a Marketing Plan, and working collaboratively with marketing leads from participating organizations. The strengthened relationships across marketing partners will help create ease of access of information flowing to small businesses.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Website management
- Listserv management
- Social media and promotion
- Strategic Plan Goals
 - ◆ Marketing: Digital & Physical
 - ◆ Feedback from Businesses
 - ◆ Networking & Events
 - ◆ Equitable Access to Capital

- Outputs determined by marketing plan
- Generate Marketing Plan each year in collaboration with members

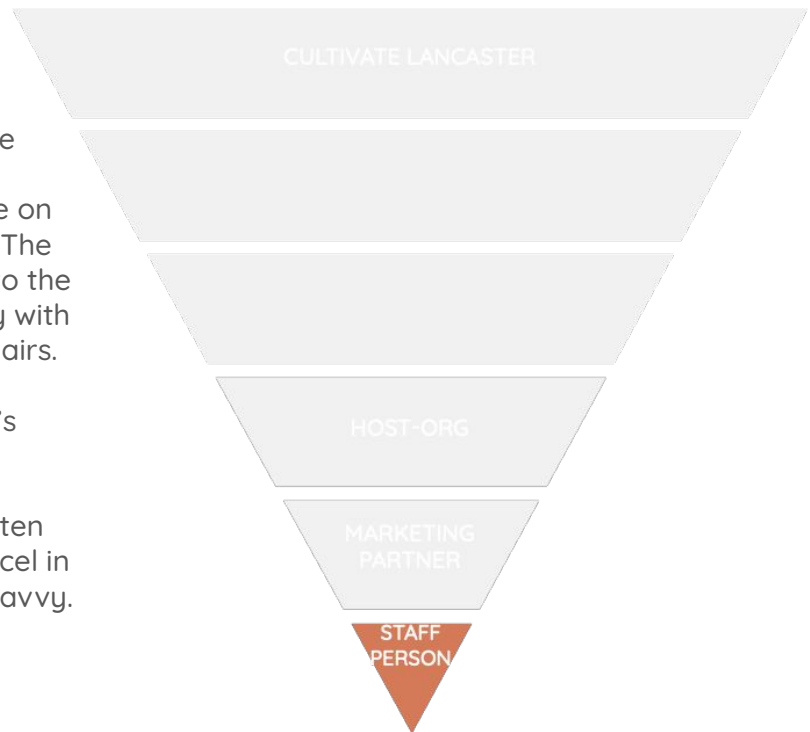
ANNUAL ALLOCATION:

- Marketer \$20,000
- Materials \$5,000

Staff Person

Cultivate Lancasters Strategic Plan will be activated by a Staff person. As such, the initiative is seeking a Staff person to take on the role of Cultivate Lancaster Manager. The Staff person will be hired by and report to the Steering Committee and will work closely with the Marketing Partner and committee chairs.

The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor’s Degree in Business, Communications, Marketing or a related field, 2-5 years of professional experience, be a strong written and oral communicator, self-directed, excel in relationship management, and be tech-savvy. Fundraising experience is a plus.



ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Coordination of meetings (committees, whole group meetings, etc)
 - ◆ Note taking and meeting follow up
 - ◆ Planning and scheduling meetings
- Relationship management
 - ◆ Onboards new partners and participants
 - ◆ Regularly engages/educates community partners on resources
- Strategic plan tracking

- Implement strategic goals (as listed)
- Oversees events and marketing implementation
- Fundraising

ANNUAL ALLOCATION:

- \$45,000

Initiative Budget

This initiative budget provides a plan for sources and uses of funds for Cultivate Lancaster. A more indepth sources and uses plan should be developed by the Steering Committee and in conjunction with the host organization. Under this plan, one staff person will be hired by a host organization. The host organization will receive funds to cover administrative costs. Marketing will be supported by a third party vendor. And, events and outreach costs will be covered by set allocations.

This is an annual budget and does not include specific costs associated with a website revamp, marketing plan development, capital fund development, or specific and yet to be identified costs associated with the plan’s goals and

activities. Specific funds for those additional costs have either already been identified or will need to be identified in collaboration between the Steering Committee and host organization.

Sources of funds for Cultivate Lancaster will come from membership dues, events income, sponsorships, and grants. Cultivate Lancaster is moving towards a more sustainable funding model that is less reliant on grants. Grants may be used to launch specific projects and plans; however, they should not be relied on for day-to-day operations. In exchange for membership and sponsorship of Cultivate Lancaster, businesses and organizations should be given recognition on all Cultivate Lancaster platforms.

EXPENSES:		INCOME:	
Operations		Membership Dues	\$46,600
→ Staff Salary	\$45,000	→ 6 Steering Committee Members	
→ Equipment & Supplies	\$2,000	→ 56 Members	
→ Host Admin & Support	\$20,000	Event Income	\$5,000
Marketing	\$35,000	Sponsorships	\$50,000
Events	\$38,000	Grants	
Contingency	\$10,000	→ LCCF Matching Grant	\$50,000
TOTAL BUDGET:	\$150,000	TOTAL INCOME:	\$151,600



CULTIVATE LANCASTER



Elements of a Successful Small Business Ecosystem

Elements of a Successful Small Business Ecosystem

A local small business ecosystem is brought to life by the relationships between people and organizations with the common purpose of improving the outcomes for local entrepreneurs. Understanding who provides what services is certainly valuable, but without a framework for collaboration and certain tangible and intangible elements, those resources cannot efficiently course correct to address overlaps, adapt to necessary changes, seek and include new partners, or ultimately affect large scale change.

Reviews of national studies, as well as Allium Development Group's work to date have identified themes for successful startup ecosystems. These themes can be divided into two categories of elements: intangible and tangible.

INTANGIBLE ELEMENTS for success of a startup ecosystem cannot be distinctly held in one's hand or written on paper, but they can certainly be felt and seen in action. These elements include:

Trust: a willingness to partner with, refer to, advocate for, and defer to organizations and entrepreneurs in the ecosystem.

Nurturing: creating an environment for success, walking with entrepreneurs on their journey to success, and knowing when to step in and when to step back.

Collaboration: recognizing other people and organizations' expertise and working together to expand the capacity of

partners to achieve common goals.

Creativity: a willingness to explore new ways to achieve common goals.

Buy-in: a desire to be at the table because of the implicit value of the larger goal.

TANGIBLE ELEMENTS for success of a startup ecosystem can be written into a plan and measured. These include communication, goal-setting and achieving, expertise, and capital. Each of these categories contains actionable steps for measured success.

COMMUNICATION

Consistent participation. Participation lasts over the course of years and may vary with intensity based on activities.

Participation is not dependent on one staff member's buy-in but is valuable to the entire organization.

Recurring and open communication.

Organizations share ideas, plans, and talk with each other. This communication allows partner organizations to adapt and develop without overlapping or competing with each other.

Accessible resources. Businesses can easily navigate and identify who is the best resource because of common terminology across partners, an easily navigable and single access point for information, as well as, organizational staff who are knowledgeable of partners' offerings.

GOAL SETTING AND ACHIEVING

Common goals. Partners have a unified vision for the local startup ecosystem. Policies and strategic plans are aligned across organizations and municipalities.

Working Together. Pods of organizations and businesses work together to achieve specific strategic common goals.

Measurement and Tracking. Mechanisms for tracking and collecting data are in place to see if common strategic goals are being met and if offerings align with businesses needs.

EXPERTISE

Specialization. Business support organizations are specialized and have widely known and specific expertise and offerings. Offerings meet the needs of local entrepreneurs.

Coordination of Programming. Business support organizations identify gaps and redundancies in programming and work to fill and reduce them.

Excellence. The business support organizations community of practice seeks excellence.

CAPITAL

Access to Capital. Access to financial tools is streamlined, transparent, equitable, and available to entrepreneurs.

When most or all of these elements of success are in place, ecosystems optimize collaboration. Business support organizations are able to effectively communicate and partner with each other, achieve common goals, understand their role and expertise within the ecosystem,

collaborate with strong partners, and connect qualified entrepreneurs with capital.

In most small business ecosystems, some of the intangible elements may be naturally occurring and should be encouraged, while many of the tangible elements may not be naturally occurring. To bridge this gap, mechanisms need to be put in place to advocate for and develop them. Most frequently, this effort is manifested through the creation of a formal structure either as a program, initiative, or organization (more common in a larger metropolis) and reinforced through a strong strategic plan.

The 2023-2025 Cultivate Lancaster Strategic Plan lays a foundation to move Lancaster County towards each of these elements of success. The Entrepreneurship Coalition has laid a solid foundation of trust, collaboration, and buy-in. The year 2020 was pivotal in that it allowed the collaborative to see the value of their efforts in action.

Moving forward into this new plan, Cultivate Lancaster will most benefit from increased communication efforts across partners and with the small business community. This plan will allow businesses to better understand and navigate available resources, and it will allow participating resource providers to implement relevant programming and better refer to partners. These specific efforts will lead to a more nurturing and creative ecosystem.

Lancaster County has landscape full of resources for small businesses and is a national leader in ecosystem building. To borrow a phrase from the Lancaster City Alliance, Cultivate Lancaster is now *building on strength*.

STUDY SOURCES

The Elements of Success and data points used in the strategic planning process were derived from Allium Development Group's work with Cultivate Lancaster Entrepreneurship Coalition between 2017 and 2021 and from themes of best practices and recommendations found in the following studies:

- Kauffman Foundation. "Why and How Do We Scale the Impact of Ecosystem Builders." www.kauffman.org. 2019.
- Kauffman Foundation. "Using the Collective Impact Model to Mobilize a City's Entrepreneur Ecosystem and Boost Economic Recovery." www.kauffman.org.
- LISC. "Building Equitable Local Ecosystems for Small Businesses: Collaboration is Key." www.lisc.org. July 2021.
- Love, Hanna, Vey, Jennifer S., Taft, William, and Demetriou, Elizabeth. "Community-centered economic inclusion: A strategic playbook." www.Brookings.edu. March 2021.
- Martin, Ellen, FSG. "Evolving Our Understanding of Backbone Organizations." www.fsg.org. December 2012.
- Next Street. "Dallas' Small Business Ecosystem Assessment: Building a Stronger, More Inclusive Future for Dallas." www.dallasecodev.org.
- Next Street. "Understanding U.S. Small Business Ecosystems: Recommendations for Field Building and Funding at the Local Level." www.nextstreet.org. 2021.

Among other conversations, research, ideas, and best practices.

Photos used in this document were provided courtesy of Cultivate Lancaster.



Allium Development Group LLC is a boutique consulting firm located in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Allium works with organizations who support small businesses as well as real estate developers to curate, activate, and transform communities. Allium calls it *placemaking for small businesses*.

www.alliumdev.com